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ABSTRACT

This hearing received testimony on school-age care. The hearing examined proposals to coordinate federal and state efforts to establish increased programs to provide after-school care for children and to improve academic and social outcomes for students by providing productive activities during after-school hours. Testimony was given by: (1) Senator Christopher J. Dodd, Connecticut; (2) Mary Margaret Oliver, State Senator, Georgia; (3) the associate director of School's Out Consortium/Seattle Most, Seattle, Washington; (4) the president and founder of the Bridgeport Youth Coalition and member of the Bridgeport Board of Education, Bridgeport, Connecticut; (5) Senator Barbara Boxer, California; (6) Edward A. Flynn, chief of police, Arlington, Virginia; (7) Thomas M. Menino, mayor, Boston, Massachusetts; (8) a parent of a child with special health needs; and (9) a program participant from the Chinle Learning Center, the Navajo Nation, Chinle, Arizona. (EV)

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SCHOOL AGE CARE: CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL CARE

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ED 424 034

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

EXAMINING PROPOSALS TO COORDINATE FEDERAL AND STATE EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH INCREASED PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE AFTER SCHOOL CARE FOR CHILDREN, INCLUDING S. 882, TO IMPROVE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS BY PROVIDING PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES DURING AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

MARCH 5, 1998

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SCHOOL-AGE CARE: CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL CARE

THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 1998

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Dodd presiding.

Present: Senators Dodd, Wellstone, Murray, and Reed.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. The hearing will come to order.

I want to thank Dan Coats for allowing me to chair the hearing today on this important issue and thank our witnesses for coming this morning to be a part of the hearing.

Just as a matter of housekeeping, at 10:30, we will have a vote on the floor of the Senate. Senator Boxer will be coming in at some point to testify, and when she does, we will have whomever is testifying complete their testimony and then, with all due respect, interrupt and let her present her testimony on this critical issue.

I want to thank my colleague from Minnesota for his continuing interest in children's issues. It is great to have allies who are strong and vibrant and who know the issues tremendously well. I have had the privilege of being with Senator Wellstone in his own State as he has worked with children's issues and children's advocates, and it is something he has dedicated a good part of his political career to, both in Minnesota and here in the U.S. Senate.

We will be hearing from other members who will come to the hearing this morning as well.

So I would like to welcome my colleagues. I apologize for having a cold this morning, and I will keep my opening remarks brief and get to our witnesses as quickly as possible.

I want to welcome all of you here this morning, including the public, to this hearing on "School-Age Care: Creative Solutions for Out-of-School Time." I would also like to thank the chairman, as I said, of the Subcommittee on Children and Families, Senator Coats, who may join us later, for agreeing to hold a hearing on this important subject matter.

It is simply a reality that many school-age children in the United States have parents who work. Unfortunately, it is also a realty that many of those children, an estimated 5 million of them, are left to care for themselves in the hours before and after school. Par-

ents worry about not being able to there when their kids get home, and frankly, they are right to be concerned. Without adequate supervision, many children experiment with very risky behaviors.

Research shows that children who are home alone after school report higher use of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. They are also more likely to be victims of crime. We also know that some kids spend those hours getting into trouble with the law. Almost half of all violent juvenile crime takes place not after 11 p.m. at night, but between the hours of 2 and 8 p.m.

It is important to note that good after-school care is not just about preventing delinquency and substance abuse. Out of school hours hold a substantial ongoing opportunity for children to learn, to play, to explore athletics, the arts and community service. We must not squander that opportunity.

Unfortunately, for too many families, affordable, high-quality school-age care is unavailable. Too many parents must rely on older siblings to care for younger ones. Too many parents find themselves left only with the option of staying close to the phone at work from 3 to 6 p.m. and hoping for the very best.

We can, and I think we must, do better for our youth. This is not a problem that parents should be left to solve on their own. It takes the involvement and the commitment of States, cities, police, schools, community and religious organizations, and most important, our young people, to create safe, productive, engaging activities.

I think the Federal Government also needs to do its share. I was proud to introduce last month, with the support of 25 of my colleagues, the "Child Care ACCESS"—that is, Affordable Child Care for Early Success and Security—Act. The bill would provide significant new resources, $4 billion over the next 5 years, to fund after-school programs. Because after-school programs are and should be as diverse as the children who need them, we have chosen to place the largest portion of these new funds in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program. With the flexibility of the block grant, States and communities can choose to fund those programs that best meet the needs of their communities, whether they are found in schools, YMCAs, YWCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, or other religious and community organizations.

The legislation also recognizes that schools may need extra support to become engaged in after-school care. We know that right now, only 30 percent of schools in lower-income neighborhoods offer after-school care, and even in more affluent areas, only half of the schools do so.

Consequently, the bill also includes an increase of $1 billion over 5 years to the 21st Century Learning Centers Program, which will target funds directly to schools to help them keep their doors open after hours.

The legislation also challenges States to improve the quality of child care overall—not through Federal mandates, but by providing funding to help communities do the things that we know make child care safer—better provider-child ratios, background checks on child care providers, training providers and paying providers. Maybe the most important is paying providers a decent wage so that we can attract good people to the field in the first place.

In addition, as part of our efforts to improve the quality of care for children with special health care needs, we will ask States to make sure that their providers are well-trained and that they receive enhanced reimbursement for offering extra services.

It is my hope that before this Congress adjourns—and we only have a few days—we will still see the enactment of comprehensive child care legislation that includes a substantial investment in mandatory funding for after-school care. Making sure that children are safe and in productive settings when they are out of school should not be a partisan issue.

Again let me thank all of our witnesses for being here. I want to thank James Horne particularly, who is a good friend of mine and does a tremendous job in Bridgeport, CT. I had the privilege of visiting the Lighthouse Program, where they have a very successful after-school program in a number of schools in that city, and James will be talking about that this morning.

And to my colleague, Mary Margaret Oliver, we welcome you and Ms. Frieling as well to our committee.

Paul, do you have any opening comments before we turn to our witnesses?

Senator WELLSTONE. Mr. Chairman, I think we have pretty similar hopes, dreams and commitments on this, and you have spoken for me, so let us go ahead and hear from the witnesses.

Senator DODD. Let us begin in the order that I have introduced each of your. Our first witness on the panel is Senator Mary Margaret Oliver, from Georgia. During her tenure in the legislature, Senator Oliver has been very involved in children's issues from foster care to violence in the media, and this morning, Senator Oliver is going to testify about the 3 O'clock Project, a very exciting and innovative program developed by the Georgia School Care Association to meet out-of-school care needs for middle school children throughout Georgia.

I would also introduce Ms. Frieling, but Senator Murray is going to be here, Janet, so I will pass by and let her introduce you when she gets here.

I have already indicated that Jim Horne is someone whom I know very well. He is president and founder of the Bridgeport Youth Coalition, Bridgeport, CT. Mr. Horne has been a long-time advocate for children in the State of Connecticut. He has served as a board member of Inner City Children's Center, the Bridgeport YMCA, and of course, the Bridgeport Board of Education. Mr. Horne will testify about the Bridgeport Youth Coalition's efforts to provide meaningful community-based after-school programming.

And as I said, Patty Murray would show up on cue. I waited for you to introduce one of our witnesses here, Patty.

Senator MURRAY. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I am delighted to be here this morning on this very important topic. I think that as parents, we all know that we worry about our kids when they go to school, but we really worry about them when they are not in school and we are not with them. So I am delighted that you are holding this hearing. I think it is a very important discussion.

I am especially pleased to welcome today a fellow Washington who flew all the way out here to be here today on a plane right

I know only too well. I want to welcome Janet Frieling from Washington State. She is the associate project director for the School's Out Consortium in Seattle. She has come here this morning to tell us about the School's Out Consortium, the MOST Initiative, and other efforts to improve the quality and professionalism of school-age services for young people in my State in the country. I think we are all going to learn a great deal from her, and I thank her for coming.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Senator, and Janet, we welcome you to the committee.

Why don't we begin in the order in which I have introduced you. Senator, welcome to the committee. We are delighted that you are here.

If I could, I am not going to turn on these lights that we sometimes use—and by the way, all the material you have that you think will be appropriate for the committee will be included in the record; that is true of all the witnesses who will appear at this hearing this morning—but if you could try to limit your presentation to somewhere in the range of 5 to 10 minutes, that would help us move along and get to the questions, which I think you may find worthwhile as well.

Please proceed, Senator.

STATEMENTS OF MARY MARGARET OLIVER, STATE SENATOR, GEORGIA STATE LEGISLATURE, ATLANTA, GA; JANET FRIELING, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, SCHOOL'S OUT CONSORTIUM/SEATTLE MOST, SEATTLE, WA; AND JAMES W. HORNE, JR., PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, BRIDGEPORT YOUTH COALITION, AND MEMBER, BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, BRIDGEPORT, CT

Ms. OLIVER. Thank you, Chairman Dodd, Senator Wellstone, Senator Murray. I am very grateful for this opportunity, and I have to say personally that each of you is a hero of mine in the political world, and I thank you for your brave leadership.

I am a member of the State Senate of Georgia, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about one of the most critical issues facing children in my State and indeed across the country—that is, after-school care or, more particularly, the absence of after-school care. I speak today specifically on behalf of 500,000 Georgian children who need high-quality, age-appropriate and accessible after-school care, and on behalf of millions more nationwide.

I am sure you have heard or will hear before these hearings are concluded from many experts on children and adolescent issues. I am not one of those experts. I am a concerned citizen and a person who is involved in policy issues, keenly interested in the children of our State and Nation. As a State legislator, I do have the opportunity to help and specifically, the opportunity to fund, some of the programs that may address the issues of after-school care.

I would like to tell you briefly about some of the things we are doing in the State of Georgia. I want to tell you about one small program that I hope could be a big program for millions of children across this Nation, an exceptional program that I hope could be more like the norm for children. I am speaking about the 3 O'Clock Project. The 3 O'Clock Project in Georgia is an initiative of the

Georgia School-Age Child Care Association, a private, nonprofit organization working to meet the after-school and summer needs specifically of middle school children—children who think they are too old for day care but who are clearly in harm's way, without adult supervision.

Our statistics in Georgia show us that 77 percent of 12-year-olds are in what we euphemistically call "self-care," and only 8 percent of 13-year-olds are involved in adult-supervised activities after school.

The 3 O'Clock Project began in the winter of 1995 in three Georgia cities, based on an appropriation of $300,000 from our general assembly, and it has now been expanded to 10 cities across Georgia—Macon, Athens, Savannah, Decatur, Atlanta, Columbus, Americus, Albany, Cordele and Statesboro.

It is funded by these States grants and particularly a variety of for-profit and nonprofit organizations, in 17 middle schools serving well over 2,000 children annually.

The success of the 3 O'Clock Project is very much based on the local partnerships, whether it is Union Camp, a large forestry industry in Georgia, in Savannah, whether it is the Rotary Club in Macon, GA. Those are the kinds of local partners whose employees are interested in the issues of the safety of their children while they are at work.

The success of the 3 O'Clock Project is directly related to the unique curriculum, I believe, of adult-supervised, age-appropriate activities in four key areas. Community service learning is an essential element of the curriculum. Children are provided structured opportunities to connect with their communities through serving at local food banks, cleaning streets, helping senior citizen centers and similar activities. Both in Decatur and in Savannah on Wednesdays, the after-school children pack food packages for the local pantries. On other days, they visit senior citizen centers. They are involved in some of the "River Keeper" activities around Ironport and Chattahoochee River.

It is an excellent example of teaching civic involvement, of engaging children in the beginnings of what are traditional volunteer services that so many of us developed and began, in fact, for many of us, our own political careers around.

The second element of the curriculum is academic enrichment. Some of the 3 O'Clock Projects have language arts in the afternoons, French clubs or science clubs. The third is socialization and recreation, where children are provided opportunities to learn and practice social skills in a safe environment.

And the fourth central element of the curriculum is communication strategies, where students interact in small groups to learn rules, practice managing differences and similar activities in order to develop successful interpersonal skills.

It is impossible to document the bad things that did not happen to participating kids because of 3 O'Clock Project, but a comprehensive evaluation of the program has been conducted, and I urge you to include a specific and mandated evaluation in any resources you provide. We learn so much from those specifically mandated—and "mandated" is a good word here—evaluations.

School attendance improved across the board based on our evaluations, and the majority of children also earned better grades. Parents and teachers reported fewer behavior problems and more cooperation with adults, and a marked improvement in discipline, following rules, based on the kinds of specific exercises—play exercises, social exercises—that they were able to utilize with preteen children who are breaking out of good behavior patterns on their own independence.

Thanks in great measure to the demonstrable success of 3 O'Clock Project, and again, with the help of State Senators and the Georgia General Assembly, I was able to authority Senate bill 50 in 1997's general assembly session to create a new, $1 million grant program for the State of Georgia to expand on after-school programs across the State. Based on that new initiative, funding for 1997, we multiplied our after-school programs more than 10-fold.

In the 1998 session, Georgia is stepping forward with $10 million of new grants for after-school activities that will have a specific reading component. Of course, we are going to leave it to the discretion of the local communities as to how they will define that, but more and more, our civic leadership and our educational leadership are teaching us to focus more on a good habit, that is, reading.

The success of the 3 O'Clock Project is the good news. The bad news is that for every child we are helping in Georgia, there are over 100 that we cannot help, despite the fact that Georgia is a national leader in after-school programs and initiatives.

As a native Georgian, I am proud that we have set forth some leadership examples, particularly on middle school activities, across the Nation. Our educational statistics for Georgia are not wonderful, and I am pleased that at least in after-school activities, I believe we are setting forth some real leadership standards.

Inadequate funding is a key limitation, but of equal importance and perhaps a prime cause of inadequate funding, is the absence of a national policy on after-school care and related issues, which of course is the focus of your activity here. Without a comprehensive national policy, what we have are disjointed, uncoordinated and inadequately funded programs and initiatives scattered through the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice.

I am encouraged that this policy vacuum has been noticed and that you are working on generating a national dialogue concerning after-school care. President Clinton's inclusion of $40 million in the current Federal budget to fund the 21st Century Learning Center Program is a significant step forward. Senator Kennedy's introduction of the American After-School Act in recent times also gives additional encouraging evidence.

And your legislation today, which is the focus of much of our energy, is going to help us in dramatic ways to set forth a national policy and a national standard.

As you move this process forward and you gather evidence, information and recommendations, I respectfully urge you to consider the following as part of the framework for the work to come. We need to develop a national consciousness of after-school care as an integral part of a complete education. The continued education ac-

tivity after 3 p.m. is essential to improving our overall test scores; we see that time and time again—longer school days, better study habits, more focus on true academic enrichment will improve the results.

We need to document the issue and the need for these programs with solid, well-funded research to serve as the basis for our forward movement. We need to recognize that funds dedicated to after-school programs represent an investment, not just in the future of our children, but in the present peace, safety and quality of life of our families and our communities.

We need to forge a national policy that will guide a comprehensive effort involving national, State and local governments as well as the private sector, to develop and implement mandatory, not discretionary, after-school and related programs.

I am particularly pleased with the enriching influence of the private programs across Georgia, the variety of the local civic leadership groups, the old-time traditional groups like the Rotary—and I am a Rotarian, so I can say that—and the new corporate civic leadership have been very important in developing a community standard and a community energy around these programs.

Those of us in public life hear about conditions in our cities and our schools and our neighborhoods that place children at risk. I submit to you that the often-heard phrase, "youth at risk," is never more true than every working day all across America between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

I thank you for the attention that you are giving to this issue. I am grateful for your leadership and, let me add, for the opportunity to add my voice to those who speak for our children.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Senator Oliver. The people in Georgia are lucky to have you down there. You are doing a great job, and I have some questions and my colleagues may as well, and we will come back to you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Oliver may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. I am going to jump ahead, Jim, if I can, to Janet Frieling, because I know my colleague from Washington has a tremendously crowded schedule here today and wants to be here for your testimony. So if we can, we will hear from you now, Janet, and as I mentioned earlier, we will have a vote at 10:30, and we will get through the witnesses before I have to run off and vote.

Janet, we are anxious to hear your comments.

Ms. FRIELING. Thank you, Senator.

I am from Washington State, and I am also honored to be here, and I thank you, Senator Dodd, for introducing your legislation. As an advocate for school-age care for a longtime, it is great to see this attention being placed on this issue.

In particular, my job and what I believe I was asked to testify about is the role of training and professional development in this system, so I think that I also speak for tens of thousands of staff who work in school-age programs and out-of-school programs.

Again just to underline, out-of-school programs provide guidance and supervision to children during their out-of-school hours. This includes summertime care, after-school hours, before-school hours,

and those wonderful days when teachers are not in session because they are working.

They operate in a variety of settings, and in Washington State, that is urban, rural, suburban, and operate under a wide variety of auspices, including libraries, YMCAs, YWCAs, Camp Fire, all of those nonprofit organizations that are making safe places for kids. They serve as violence prevention strategies and ensure that parents can work without the worry of what their children are doing.

My particular focus is at the School's Out Consortium, where we have about 25 trainers who provide about 3,600 hours of training to staff who work in programs. The reason why we have made this investment is because we know how critical it is that staff are well-trained to work with these young children. They need to know about their social and emotional growth and development, they need to know how to plan appropriate activities, they need to know that recreation is important, and they need to be there as a support system for their academic enrichment.

Now, all of these things are not things that you learn by yourself; it takes guidance from experienced staff. So we have 25 trainers who provide this information to people working in programs in a variety of ways. One of those ways is onsite training and technical assistance, where programs, through a contract with the City of Seattle and the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, provide onsite training directly at the program site, working side-by-side with either the program director or the staff in the program to model appropriate behaviors with children. They might work with the director to develop fundraising plans, marketing plans, how to write a grant, how to get funding, which is a big issue in these programs. They also talk about behavior guidance and field trip supervision, checking-in procedures—a whole host of different activities. But they do this in a one-on-one way that really establishes a relationship.

Most programs in the Seattle area receive between 25 and 50 hours of onsite training per year, and again, that is supported by funding from the City of Seattle through a levy funding, which is something that we are very proud of in our city, and through a contract with the Department of Parks and Recreation.

This model has been evaluated, and I appreciate Senator Oliver's comments about how important that evaluation is, because I agree that it is critical to evaluate any kind of projects that are going on. It has had resounding effects, and the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation is the project that specifically had an evaluation component, and almost every center now is meeting the quality standards at a rate of "3," which is the highest rating. One provider in particular said she could not have done it without her School's Out trainer, because it was a helping hand outside of the organization that helped her get through the barriers that big structures sometimes put up.

Another thing that our trainers are involved in, with the MOST Initiative—and we actually have our brand new copy of the "National School-Age Care Standards for Quality School-Age Care"—Seattle was one of many cities in the Nation that took part in a pilot project to help programs go through an accreditation process. With our trainers' help, the process at our sites was much smooth-

er for them to go through the accreditation process. Again, the trainers provided onsite, one-to-one care, helping hand, helping them work with parents, helping them gather community support to go through such an accreditation system. So it was a very important asset to them.

Our participation was through the MOST Initiative, which is Making the Most of Out of School Time. Seattle was one of three cities selected to receive a grant from the DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Foundation, and that has given us an enormous influx of funding to do some very creative things in our city. So we do appreciate them as well.

Another way that School's Out Consortium delivers training to professionals is in community workshops. Not all staff come to us into the programs ready to work. We have from 16-year-olds up to 70-year-olds working in these programs, with all levels of experience. So we do community workshops throughout the year. There are some topics that are needed every year and quite frequently—behavior management, planning activities for kids—and part of that is because of the high turnover rate and low compensation. So, Senator Dodd, I was extremely pleased to see in your proposal attention to the compensation issues, because that is something we do need to address. In the pilot for the standards, the programs that had high turnover were turnover we not able to complete the pilot project because of the turnover. So I was excited to see that.

Another thing of the MOST Initiative was the Seattle Central Community College Mentor Project and Feasible Pathway Project. School's Out Consortium has been involved to establish an actual school-age care degree through the child and family studies program. Part of the issue of school-age care is that you cannot get a degree in school-age care; you can get a degree in early childhood education, but caring for a 4-year-old is very different than caring for an 11-year-old. So we have been really struggling with that, and that is something that is true across the country as well.

Through the child and family studies program, they can actually take classes that are specific to the age of children and youth that we are talking about, and they can get credits which can be applied to an A.A. degree that does have a school-age care emphasis. This is really critical. In any profession, you need continuing education, and we are excited to have that be a part of the MOST Initiative and to really have these staff who are working in programs see themselves as professionals, see that this is a career, and see that there are other opportunities in front of them.

Another thing that the School's Out Consortium is involved in is providing the infrastructure for our School-Age Care Alliance, which is much like the Georgia School-Age Care Alliance, although they are a little bit older and a little bit more coordinated. So we help our State alliance plan their Statewide conference, where about 250 providers come together annually to network, to listen, to share concerns and learn about the newest techniques. So it really is a Statewide system as well, and we use our child care development funds across the State to do regional training as well, so that even people in the very rural communities are receiving access to the training.

In closing, I would just like to say again thank you, Senator Dodd, for introducing this bill and including some of the compensation issues underlining the importance of professional development and training and for having this attention to school-age care.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Janet.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Frieling may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Jim, we are again thrilled that you could be here.

We have been joined by Senator Reed who, as has Senator Murray, has been working on these issues for a long time. I can tell you that no set of issues in the area of child care, provokes as much interest as this particular one, that is, school-age care. Child care, infant care, toddler care and Head Start are all very, very important, but this school-age care is really where parents get tremendously concerned that we are just not paying enough attention to it.

One of the things that Bridgeport has done—and I want to ask Jim about this when the question period comes—is cut the gordian knot—bringing together unions and others to change the dynamics of their interactions, is very, very difficult to do. Bridgeport has done this, and we are tremendously pleased with your success at it.

Senator DODD. My colleague from California has arrived, and I have already told the witnesses, Barbara, that we are going to have you come right up, because we know your schedule is difficult.

We thank you immensely for coming. Senator Boxer, as everyone in the room knows, is a distinguished Senator from California and has introduced her own legislation in this area. She has spent a tremendous amount of time and has great interest in child care, but school-age care particularly. So we are very excited that you are here.

STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA BOXER, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

Senator BOXER. Well, thank you so very much. I just came from a FEMA hearing—we go from one thing to the next—and I am a little out of breath.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership, and Senator Murray, Senator Reed, and all those Senators who understand that talking about children is one thing, doing something about helping them is another.

Rather than read my testimony, I would ask that it be placed in the record.

Senator DODD. Without objection.

Senator BOXER. And I will just speak from the heart. In the seventies, when I was a young working mom, I was very concerned about my children, obviously, as all moms were and are. And looking around, I saw that there really were not many actions that were really that good for kids, latchkey kids. So I called together the moms in the school district, and we all worked together and set up an after-school program utilizing the facilities of the public school. We set a program with a sliding-scale fee, and I am proud

to tell you that that program is still operational—the same program.

Now, there is a reason for that. It was necessary. It was necessary then, and it is more necessary now. I remember when we set that up, and we tried to convince the school superintendent in the district that it was important. He looked at us and said, "Well, you do not have to work."

And we said, "Really? We do—and anyway, we are. And we need this help."

He left the district soon after that little debate, but the program still moves forward with a sliding scale.

So clearly, here I am, so many years later, and we have more of a need than ever. So let me tell you about what I think we should do. First, I think we should build on the models that are working, and I would just mention two in my States, which are Sacramento START and LA's BEST.

These programs utilize the schools that they have, and they set up these wonderful after-school programs—some of them start before school—and the children are doing so well that their academic performance on average has gone up by 70 percent.

I visited these places to try to find out what the magic is. The magic is there are really good people involved, and they do these things—mentoring programs, academic assistance, recreational activities, technology training. So I thought, well, at least two of those ought to be done after school, so it is not quote-unquote frivolous activities. The kids really need the help.

So that in our bill, we say you have got to do two of the following—mentoring, academic assistance, recreational activities, technology training—any two; and then we have a list of what you might do also—drug, alcohol and gang prevention activities, health and nutrition counseling, job skills preparation activities. We give a plus to those school districts that bring in the community, the business community and so on.

Mr. Chairman, your leadership in this area is really legendary and will be your legacy some day, and I hope that is not for a long, long time——

Senator DODD. From your mouth to God's ear. [Laughter.]

Senator BOXER. I know, I know. I have similar feelings about someone else I like a lot.

The bottom line is that this is the moment in which we can act because, as was written in the L.A. Times not too long ago, everyone who is running sounds like they are running for school board, and this is great if we can really make things happen.

This after-school idea is not new. It is proven. Not only do you make a contribution to lowering the crime rate, because as you know, the crime rate spikes—the FBI says from 2 to 6; I have been using the hours of 3 to 6—but they say 2 to 6 is when juveniles are either the victims of crime or perpetrate crime. When I wrote this bill, I was going to offer it to the juvenile justice bill as well as to the education bill, because if there is a silver bullet that cures a lot of problems—and of course, there never is—but if there were a silver bullet, this would be it.

So I am very excited. The President's proposal is much broader than mine. Mine was a modest program of 500 grants, $50 million

a year, and his is more like $200 million a year, and yours is large. I think the moment is here to do this for our children, and I think there is nothing we could do that is easier to do, because you do not have the build anything—the buildings are there, and the kids are there. And we know that it can be done easily. We have programs that we can model after. There is nothing magic that happens to a child at the age of 2 or 3 that says I no longer need help, I no longer need to learn, I no longer need nurturing—I am going to be fine, even though I am only 8 years old. It just does not work that way. They go home, they are home alone, they get in trouble, and we have an opportunity to change it.

So again, my deepest thanks for allowing me to speak with you about this, and I look forward to making this a reality.

[The prepared statement of Senator Boxer may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Thank you, immensely, Senator Boxer. As I said at the outset, your efforts in this have been tremendously helpful. And like Senator Murray, who herself was in a similar situation as you have described, you bring a special awareness to this debate, because it is more than just an intellectual exercise, having been a mother and having gone through the pain and worry of wondering where your children are and whether they are not only safe, but are they involved in productive activities, as you so rightly point out. It is tremendously helpful to us.

Senator BOXER. And Mr. Chairman, just to completely close the circle, now I am a grandmother, and I have a working daughter, and I see her struggling with the same issues that I struggled with. So you have got to say let us make it a little easier here for our kids and our parents.

Senator DODD. Thanks very, very much.

Senator DODD. Jim Horne, as I mentioned, is from Bridgeport, and he will also be welcoming the President of the United States in Bridgeport on Tuesday. The President will be coming to Connecticut to see some of the child care programs and possibly some of the after-school programs as well. I am not sure what the schedule is yet, but I know you are going to be there to greet him when he comes to our State.

Jim, we thank you for being here and would be happy to take your testimony now.

Mr. HORNE. Senator Dodd, thank you for inviting me, and to the rest of the Senators, I want to say thank you for taking the time out on this important issue.

I would not like to read my testimony, but would ask that it be put into the record, and I will just give you a little bit about my background as a preface to talking about the importance of after-school programs and safe programs for young people.

As a lifelong resident of the city of Bridgeport, I have had an opportunity to see first-hand some of the issues that confront young people. I live in the North End of the city of Bridgeport, and I have lived in that particular neighborhood for about 35 years, in Census Tract 728. In that Census Tract, there is a housing project which I first lived in, called Trumble Gardens. Trumble Gardens is where my family first moved, and at that time, it was a beautiful housing

project. Since then, as with most housing projects, it has deteriorated.

My family was very fortunate in that we were able to move a couple blocks down the street and purchase a home where I grew up with two parents, in a pretty safe and secure environment.

Since that time, I have been able to stay in that particular neighborhood and raise my own family. We have a home not too far from Trumble Gardens. But as a leader in the community and someone who has been active in Bridgeport since the mid-1980's, a lot of my time has been spent supporting people in my community who have issues in terms of accessing the city government.

One of those issues that confronted me in the early 1990's was when a group of young people from Trumble Gardens whom I grew up with came to me and said, "You know, Jim, there is nothing for young people to do here." We were particularly concerned about young men. A lot of our teenagers were being lured away for other negative opportunities in terms of drugs and violence and crime, and we were really concerned that we were losing too many young people, particularly from the ages of 10 to 13. That is an age where we found that the young guys would be lured away by the promise of fast money, and we needed to find a way to make it more secure and safe for them.

About four or five of us sat down and decided that we were going to do something about the problem, and we created an organization called the Bridgeport Youth Coalition. The Bridgeport Youth Coalition came into existence primarily to deal, as I said, with the issue of what to do with young people. Our first project was a basketball league, a very simple thing, but we wanted to do a little bit more than that. So as a carrot, we allowed you to play basketball, but we wanted you also to spend some time with workshops, where we brought in other people from the community who have been successful to talk to the young people about their experiences as young people and how they were able to overcome some of the obstacles and about where they are now in their lives.

It was a very good model, and it worked very well, and we were able to get a $3,000 grant from our local foundation, as well as tapping into some local small businesses in our local community to support the program.

From that point, we incorporated, through the help of several people in the community, and today, the Bridgeport Youth Coalition is providing after-school services in two schools in that particular Census Tract, and we think we are doing a pretty successful job.

A little bit about Bridgeport as a whole, which I think is very important. We have had our struggles. The city, as Senator Dodd knows, declared bankruptcy in the early nineties, and because of that, we had a lot of difficulties attracting people and businesses to our community. With that, our tax base shrunk, and the services to our citizens also were reduced. And unfortunately, the people who suffered the most were our children. Recreation programs disappeared, funding for education from the city was reduced, and we had a situation whereby all over the city of Bridgeport, we had young people with nothing to do after school, no place to go. Par-

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ticularly in our neighborhood in the North End, there was no recreation center, no YMCA, Boys Club, or anything like that.

So literally, after school, we would let young people just roam the streets in the North End of our city, and that was a very big concern to us. One of the things that happened in 1992, as the Bridgeport Youth Coalition was beginning to get on board, was that the city also recognized the need to do something to combat the issue of safe places for young people after school, and collectively, we decided that we had these great school buildings where we were paying for heat, electricity, and security, and that at 2:30 in the afternoon, we would lock the doors and keep people out. And we decided, wouldn't it be great to utilize these buildings a little more efficiently and effectively to allow community groups to come in and run programs.

The city and the Bridgeport Board of Education, which I serve on and have been serving on for the past 10 years, decided that it was time for us to take on this issue and to really do something about it. So we got together with some local service providers, colleges, and we allowed them to create programs and run them in our school buildings. We funded those programs through State funding and some city funding. That funding went directly to the service provider. The service provider's responsibility was to work with the principal in that school to ensure that those students who were in that school had a safe place to go after school, to ensure that the parents in that community understood that those programs were available and could take advantage of them. And since 1992, we started with 12 schools, and we are now up to 16 schools, and the programs range from the 3 to 6 model, which is primarily for the immediately after-school services to a 3 to 9 p.m. model in some of our more distressed neighborhoods, to some Saturday programs which are open all day, which allow young people to not only have a safe place to go on Saturday, but to have some academic enhancement, to learn some other skills. We have some great chess clubs, and Senator Dodd, if you ever want to come and learn how to play chess, we have some great young people who can probably beat most adults; they have been doing it for quite some time. We also offer other programs, arts and crafts, as well as other learning initiatives.

We think the model is a great model. Our collaboration with the Bridgeport Youth Coalition really began not only with just the people in the neighborhood, but we also looked to traditional community organizations. One of our big supporters initially was the YMCA. Our organization is unique because we are a community-based, grassroots organization, and we lack the administrative capacity to really run a program of that magnitude. Issues like managing payroll, making sure the IRS was not breathing down our back in terms of paying taxes were things that we were concerned about.

The YMCA and other city institutions came to our rescue, gave us a little Finance 101 and Administrative 101 experience, and really mentored Bridgeport Youth Coalition to the point where we became able to self-sustain our own program. And we found that to be very helpful.

That collaboration still exists today, and we feel that collaboration is key. We in the Bridgeport Youth Coalition realize that we cannot be all things to all people, and what we do well is tutoring, recreational programs, arts and crafts; but in terms of some of the more severe social needs, we have been able to collaborate with other community organizations to come in and provide services to our young people. The American Red Cross, for instance, comes in and teaches our young people safety tips and how to be safe at home. They also provide us with lifesaving skills and techniques for our young people. We have a substance abuse program where they come in and counsel our young people on how to stay away from drugs and cigarettes and alcohol. And again, for that expertise that we do not have, the collaboration allows us to utilize other organizations to do that.

Specifically, as we move forward with legislation on after-school programs, the funding profile is very competitive. The essence of getting money back to the local community is really a struggle. In the city of Bridgeport, through the support of the local government and through the support of the board of education, we were able to make sure that those dollars got back to the local communities, that the service providers understood that there was a mandate for them to collaborate not only with each other, but also to include the community in planning the programming.

Our organization particularly is very proud of the fact that our staff is made up primarily of people from the community. We have mothers who have never had a job before who have come to us, and we have trained them to be counselors. We have teenagers who have their first job being our junior counselors. It is a great feeling now to provide them with that service and to see them be able to provide something to young people in their communities, particularly young people whom they feel very strongly about.

So through that collaboration, through that commitment to the local community, we see a change in our young people. Crime is down, juvenile delinquency is down, outcomes for students have improved; we see that through our test scores, and in the package, I have provided you some information on how those test scores have shown that reading is up, math is up. In Bridgeport, we have a very difficult time moving those test scores along, but the additional time that young people have in a school setting allows them to get that extra attention that they need, and that is why after-school programs are so important, besides just the safety factor. So that is another big reason.

But there are also some other concerns. My staff-to-student ratio, particularly in the summer months when we are open a fully day, last year, I ended up turning away about 200 students because my staff-to-student ratio was one staff to 35 students. That is just unmanageable. In a community where I have over 1,000 young people, unfortunately, I am only able to serve 400 at a time due to the funding constraints, and that is unfair for those other parents who have to be turned away and be sent to programs where they are forced to pay a fee, which they cannot afford, which is a hardship on them.

So that is what I hope your legislation will address and allow additional opportunities for us to serve additional young people.

I just want to say thank you for what you are doing. I think it shows that after-school programs can really work. We think our model in Bridgeport is a very, very successful model, and we look to expand that through your legislation as well as President Clinton's 21st Century initiative. Our goal is to allow every young person in the city of Bridgeport the opportunity to have a safe place to go after school, to have somewhere to go during the summer months while those parents are at work, so they can feel confident and secure that their young people are not only in a safe place, but they are also learning something that will benefit them in the future.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Horne may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Thank you, Jim, immensely. That was excellent, excellent testimony.

Let me turn to my colleague from Rhode Island. We do have a vote on, but do you have any comments you would like to make, Jack, before we recess to vote?

Senator REED. I just want to comment you, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership on this issue. You have been terrific getting us together and pushing forward the envelope.

And to the witnesses, who are on the front lines, if you will, thank you all for your testimony.

We do have a vote, and I will try to get back after the vote, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Great. We will take a break for about 10 minutes and come back for some questions. It was excellent testimony.

The subcommittee stands in recess.

[Recess.]

Senator DODD. The committee will come back to order.

I thank the witnesses for their patience, and as I said before the recess, I very much appreciate your very thoughtful comments and testimony. You really anticipated many of the questions, I think, that we might have had.

Senator, I am curious—you sit on this side of the dais in your own State legislature—it can be difficult to convince people to support these efforts. Tell me just quickly what were some of the arguments you used to convince your colleagues in the Georgia State legislature—of course, you have a wonderful Governor who cares a lot about these issues.

Ms. OLIVER. We have a wonderful Governor, and our present lieutenant Governor, Pierre Howard, is the father of young children who are in public school at a young age, and he is simply very aware in his own personal life of these needs.

We have had some people who stepped forward in local leadership. Very often, it comes down to local leadership setting forth these models of excellent. And I think that most of the members of the general assembly are recognizing more and more that what people care about, what motivates them, are issues of home, family and school.

So we politicians, I think, are catching up with what the public is demanding, and that is more help in relation to the way they are living their lives in their communities.

Senator DODD. Jim Horne talked about the crime issue, and you may have mentioned it, and shortly, we will be hearing from Mayor Menino from Boston. We have seen a tremendous reduction in crime rates, not only in Bridgeport, but in New York—people have seen the headlines. Do you have any idea in Georgia what the impact has been of these after-school programs?

Ms. OLIVER. We know that after-school programs are one of the essential parts of a solution to the significant problem of juvenile justice that we have in Georgia. The State of Georgia within the last 2 weeks received a very condemning report in relation to our juvenile justice system. I was very proud to be here today to talk about after-school programs, because our national and our local press have been quite critical that we have not managed effectively enough the explosion of juvenile crime that we are seeing in Georgia. As you said in your earlier statement, juvenile crime, victims of crime, and perpetrators of crime happen between the hours of 3 and 6 p.m.

As we are trying to work on this very critical Justice Department report—and in fact, Governor Miller was in Washington last week to meet directly—we know that after-school programs tie into prevention of juvenile crime. That is one of the constructs of the arguments that we in Georgia can make in the face of the criticisms we are receiving about the end-product of the management of our juvenile system problem.

So it is clear to me, and the research is clear, from the law enforcement and from the leaders in our school communities, that extending the school day in productive ways significantly helps to reduce the tension, the perception and the reality of juvenile crime after school.

Senator DODD. Thank you for that. I appreciate it very much.

Jim, one thing you mentioned in your testimony that you would like to see better addressed in the future is children with learning disabilities. I am very interested in this and we have included it in our bill. We have seen some wonderful reports in the last 48 hours, in fact, on dyslexia which are very, very encouraging in terms of our ability now to medically begin to treat some of these issues.

We are also entering a period now where huge gaps can exist between the skill levels of young people and the jobs that are out there to be filled, and they are just going to have skill levels much higher than any of us have ever had to achieve in order to be employable and to meet the job requirements of a 21st century economy.

I have been to your program, and I have seen it, and I am very impressed with it, and I wonder if you might comment quickly on that and also if you could talk about how you sorted out the turf battles—and when the Mayor comes up, I am going to ask him this as well. One of the things we run into in towns is that you have the teachers' unions, you have the custodians and everybody else, and when you start talking about wanting to keep these buildings open later, there is a cost factor that is not insignificant, and you hear people saying, "Well, that was not part of the job description here that I hired on for." Could you briefly tell me how you wove your way through that in Bridgeport?

Mr. HORNE. First, the children with learning disabilities issue, and I will just speak from the board member's perspective for a moment. In Bridgeport, as in most urban centers, I think, we have a problem with children being identified as learning disabled too early on. Once a child gets that label, it is very difficult for them to be unlabeled as a child with special needs.

One of the things that we have realized is that many of those labels are inappropriate. In particularly, we find that some children who have been labeled as having learning disabilities have other issues. They live in a neighborhood where they hear gunshots every day, or people in their family have died violently, and things of that nature. So quite frankly, if you live in that kind of an environment, you are not going to come to school prepared to learn.

So in the after-school programs particularly, we try to work with those children in smaller groups to talk about some things that are more relevant to them in terms of their social environment, and then also to work with them in terms of relieving that tension so that they can then focus in on the task at hand, and that is being educated. So we feel that we need to deal with the whole child, and I think that our ability to do that is obviously hindered by our ability to work in small groups to provide those services needed to those children, specifically in terms of their social problems. But once we can do that and once we can help them work through some of those problems that they encounter in their neighborhoods and in their homes, we find that they can then function better in the classroom. And basically, what our teachers need us to do is relieve them of some of the social issues that their children come to school with, and that is what we try to do in the evenings with those young people, is work through those problems first and then help them to be able to focus better.

Senator DODD. Is there a lot of communication between the staff who work with these kids after school and their actual teachers during the day? In some cases, are they the same people?

Mr. HORNE. Getting back to your issue about how we dealt with the bureaucracy, the unions, in our program, we ensure that our lead staff person works in the school. It has got to be a certified teacher, preferably in that school building, and our preference is to have more than one person on staff who actually works in that school. So we have teachers' aides from that particular school who work with those young people in the evening.

Senator DODD. How about transportation, which is a big issue. How do you get these kids from one school to the next?

Mr. HORNE. Transportation is really a problem, and what we have found is that we would prefer not to deal with the transportation issue. We would prefer that neighborhood schools provide those services, and where we have students who are bussed from one neighborhood to another neighborhood for school, we encourage them to go back to their home neighborhood for those services. Now, that might be a little counterproductive to the continuity of teacher-to-student during the after-school program, but what it does is give them a sense of neighborhood. Serving them in the neighborhood in which they live, we think is very, very important. So that is one of the things that we really think we should focus

in on, is serving young people where they live as opposed to bussing them to other communities.

Senator DODD. Yes, I agree.

Mr. HORNE. But what we do, particularly in the summertime—because our schools do not all have swimming pools and facilities like that—is we really utilize our transportation budget more so during the summer months, when it is important for us to get them out and give them other experiences, and that is really where we find a need for help in the transportation budget. One bus trip costs us $125, and that is local. To go out-of-town costs about $200.

Senator DODD. That is for gas, the driver——

Mr. HORNE. That is for the case, the driver; that is the charge by the bus company to us, and that is at a discounted rate.

Senator DODD. Do you pay extra for insurance? These are very practical little questions here, but they are the ones that we have to wrestle with.

Mr. HORNE. We do have to wrestle with those, and one of the mandates from the city was that we had to have our own insurance policy, so that yes, we had to invest in our own insurance policy. The city would not cover us on their rider.

Senator DODD. Those things all add up. They sound great, but there is a price tag on all of these things.

Mr. HORNE. Particularly when you get the budget from the city, and it says that you will only use 7 percent for administrative, and that administrative includes your insurance, the cost of your payroll, your bookkeeper and all of those things. That is really not a lot of money.

Senator DODD. Which brings me to Janet, and I appreciate immensely your focusing on the quality of staff and the training and the education, and I think all of you have addressed the issue of retention. We hear this all the time with Head Start teachers, early childhood development providers and so forth. How do you keep qualified people so you can have some continuity for the children given the concerns about costs.

One reason why we pay so much attention to it in our bill is that the training needs of school-age providers are different than for infant care providers. When you are dealing with 5-, 6-, 7-, 8-, 9-, 10- and 11-year-olds, it is a very different set of issues than it is with that infant care.

Ms. FRIELING. Yes, it is, and I appreciate that you did put that part in the bill. School-age care programs I think are even more hard-hit than infant and toddler programs, because at least the staff that work in those programs are more likely to be offered full-time employment. School-age programs during the school year are open for 2 to 3 hours in the morning, then there is a long break of time where the children go to school, and then they open again at 3 in the afternoon, and then they are open until 6 in the evening. So there is not full-time employment, and many organizations do not offer benefits for that reason.

One of the things that we have looked at in Seattle, and many of our programs are doing this successfully, is that the staff person will work at the school during the afternoon as an aide, a playground assistant, or a worker in the classroom and will then go to the school-age program and work in the afternoon, and that will

give them a full-time job and make them eligible for benefits. It is those staff who are more likely to stay longer than the staff who are only offered the morning-only shift, the afternoon shift, and are not able to have a full-time shift.

It is a critical issue, and schools are not at all times the most friendly collaborators in this project, so I think that that is a huge issue that we need to look at, is how can we better utilize and make these full-time positions, because we are competing against the McDonalds and the Starbucks and the other businesses that are able to offer more than minimum wage. We have got to keep these programs affordable for families—that is the bottom line—and so they are not necessarily able to pay the highest wages. So it is critical, but I think that as providers, we also need to remember that these are human beings, professionals, who are supporting families, and they need to have more than just a 4-hour shift to support themselves.

So I think one thing that the MOST Initiative has really taught us is that it takes thoughtful community planning by a lot of players involved to get together and sit down and come up with some creative solutions. You cannot do business as usual; you need to think of other creative ways.

Senator DODD. I should have asked you all this in the beginning, and I realize this varies from child to child, let alone from area to area, but basically, by the time a child is in a middle school environment, they are old enough—and there is a question mark at the end of this; am I correct in this—to have choices in how they use their after school time. They start to get into that high school environment where there are athletic programs and band and all sorts of extra things—what is the critical period that we are looking at here in terms of age?

Ms. OLIVER. The key for our Georgia-designed middle school-age program focus was 10 to 14. We know that those children can elect, by just getting up and walking out, not to participate in a lot of these programs, so the curriculum has got to be engaging to their particular age. They have got to in some way begin to like school and in some way begin to feel like it is something that they are doing in a positive and enriching way. It is a significantly different age group, and the curriculum and therefore the engagement that they have must be different.

Senator DODD. And prior to the age of 10?

Ms. OLIVER. Children are a little more malleable being in what we may think of as traditional day care settings, and they will not choose—they do not have as much of a sense of just choosing an afternoon activity.

Senator DODD. Jim, do you have any variation on that?

Mr. HORNE. If I could just add to what Senator Oliver mentioned, the 10 to 14 age group I think is very critical, because what you need to teach a child at that time is how to spend those nonstructured hours productively—and when I say "nonstructured," I mean noneducational hours—because the middle school time is very important, because if you do not teach them the value of doing something productive after school, then they are not going to make it to band or to play basketball in high school. They will in fact have

learned other habits, and unfortunately, those are negative habits. I think it is important in that age group.

Senator DODD. Janet, do you have any comment on that at all?

Ms. FRIELING. Well, I would just like to say that not all students participate in sports and after-school types of activities, and that although that meets the needs of some students, there are many, thousands and thousands, for whom that is not their thing to do after school. So I would agree with Jim that we need to have the arts and crafts and the drama and also just a safe place where they can socialize with other students their own age. Not everybody is a basketball player.

Senator DODD. Yes, that is true.

All three of you have been great, and I could spend all day with you, asking questions on the details of this. In fact, we were asking people from Bridgeport—and Jim, you are going to be a part of this—to hold a seminar in the State for our other towns and cities, because very few of them have after-school programs. We're asking them particularly to address mayors and city managers and board of education people on how to weave their way through some of these bureaucratic issues.

It is one thing to say you want to do it, but you need to look at what the costs are for things like insurance policies, transportation, union issues and so forth. It is daunting to some smaller communities to do it, so they just do not even try. We are going to be doing that in Connecticut and using Bridgeport as our model, so we will be calling on you to act as sort of a mentor, if you will.

Mr. HORNE. We will be honored to do that.

Senator DODD. I am going to leave the record open for any additional questions that other members may have for all three of you.

Mary Margaret, we thank you immensely for coming. Congratulations, and good luck to you in future endeavors.

And Jim, we will see you on Tuesday with the President.

Mr. HORNE. Absolutely.

Senator DODD. And Janet, thanks for making the long trip from Washington State.

Ms. FRIELING. Thank you.

Senator DODD. I will call our second panel forward, and I am going to reserve the introduction of one of our witnesses until our colleague from Massachusetts arrives, but suffice it to say that while he is not a mayor in my State, he is one of my favorite mayors, and I mean that, Tom. It is great to have you here. You have done a tremendous job in Boston. All my life, I have had to grow up exporting my allegiances on sports, and while Boston is not a part of Connecticut, I have spent my life living and dying with the Red Sox and watching the Celtics last night against Utah, so I have had all these things to associate with. So we are pleased that you are here. You have done a tremendous job in Boston, and I will reserve your introduction until my colleague from Massachusetts arrives, because he would be furious with me if I had you come up here without his being allowed to introduce you.

I am very excited about a couple of our other witnesses, who I think are going to address some important issues, and I am going to ask them to join us as I am introducing them.

Ed Flynn is currently the chief of police in the Arlington County Police Department. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and was a National Institute of Justice Pickett Fellow in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. Chief, we are pleased to have you here. You are no relation to a previous mayor of Boston by any chance, are you?

Mr. FLYNN. No.

Senator DODD. The chief is going to testify today on behalf of "Fight Crime: Invest in Kids," a nationwide organization that supports quality activities for youth during their out-of-school time as an alternative to drugs, gangs and violence. And chief, we thank you immensely for being with us.

I am very, very pleased to introduce our next witness. I think he wins the award for coming the furthest. Eric, it is really a thrill to have you here. Eric Yonnie is a participant in a youth development program in Chinle, AZ—is that correct?

Mr. YONNIE. Yes.

Senator DODD. How am I doing?

Mr. YONNIE. Pretty good.

Senator DODD. Eric will testify about his experiences in the program and how he has benefited from his tutoring and youth development opportunities. Joining Eric is Sharon Jones, Eric's program director, who will provide some background.

Eric, I want you to know that I have been to Window Rock, AZ, and I have spoken to the Navajo Nation, and I considered it a great honor to be able to do so in that beautiful setting.

And I want you to know that I am told this is the first time Eric has ever been outside of Chinle, let alone come to Washington; is that correct?

Mr. YONNIE. Yes.

Senator DODD. Well, we are honored that you are here today and are looking forward to hear what you have to say.

Mr. YONNIE. Thank you.

Senator DODD. It is a thrill to have you here before this Senate committee.

Mr. YONNIE. It is a thrill to be here.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Eric.

And finally, Cynthia Kiefer will testify about her experience as a parent of a child with special needs, an issue I addressed a little bit earlier with Jim Horne. Cynthia will discuss the unique challenges that parents face in finding affordable, high-quality child care for their children who need extra support. We thank you for being here as well, Cynthia.

I have mentioned the mayor, and Boston is only one of three cities nationwide to receive a grant to meet after-school needs from Readers Digest Foundation, and that is certainly an indication of your commitment and that of the city of Boston to this issue in one of the major metropolitan areas of our Nation. Certainly, the problems are daunting and staggering in regard to dealing with these issues.

I saw Senator Kennedy on the floor, and he will be right over; he had to stop at another committee hearing, but he will be here in a moment.

in the meantime, Chief, we are going to begin with you, and as soon as Senator Kennedy arrives, we will have you finish up your testimony, and he will introduce the mayor.

In the meantime, I want all of you to know that your testimony will be included in the record, along with any documents or evidence you would like to offer. So, share your thoughts with us, and if you can, try to limit your time to somewhere between 5 and 10 minutes, so we can get to questions.

Chief, thanks for being here.

STATEMENTS OF EDWARD A. FLYNN, CHIEF OF POLICE, ARLINGTON, VA; HON. THOMAS M. MENINO, MAYOR, CITY OF BOSTON, BOSTON, MA; CYNTHIA KIEFER, PARENT OF A CHILD WITH SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS, NASHVILLE, TN; AND ERIC YONNIE, PROGRAM PARTICIPANT, CHINLE LEARNING CENTER, THE NAVAJO NATION, CHINLE, AZ, ACCOMPANIED BY SHARON JONES, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Mr. FLYNN. Thank you for having me here. I am proud to be here representing "Fight Crime: Invest in Kids," which is a national anti-crime organization led by police, prosecutors and crime survivors.

I would like to say that in my 27 years of police experience, I have had the privilege of being a police chief in three different jurisdictions. One was a prosperous suburban town, one was a desperately poor inner city located right next to Boston, as a matter of fact, and now I have the opportunity to be police chief in a prosperous but socially and economically diverse county here in Metropolitan Washington, DC.

One thing has remained constant in all three jurisdictions, and that is that regardless of race, ethnicity or class, our children are most vulnerable to temptation and to crime in the hours between 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. We owe it to their safety and to ours to act on our knowledge of that fact.

We are satisfied in the police field that after-school programs have been proven to dramatically and immediately cut crime, while they help kids develop the skills and values they need to succeed. Study after study has shown that after-school programs can dramatically reduce crime, particularly when they are focused in high-crime areas.

As a first step, we would strongly endorse measures by Congress to significantly fund after-school programs for kids, and I think I might add, as a police chief who has encouraged alcohol as well as tobacco stings in three different jurisdictions, that it might be a useful source of funding for these programs to perhaps dun the same industry that our kids first experiment with, and that is tobacco, and perhaps some of those funds might be made available to provide positive opportunities for kids as opposed to just providing them opportunities to hang out on street corners and smoke cigarettes.

We feel that it is critical to maximize our crime prevention impact by giving this high priority to our inner cities particularly. We have done surveys of police chiefs. Last month, for example, nearly 200 police chiefs, prosecutors and crime victims called on Congress

to see that all kids have access to quality child care after-school programs.

Just 10 days ago, the major cities' police chiefs demonstrated that they held the same views on this subject. Whether big city or small town, 92 percent of police chiefs nationwide agreed with the following statement: That America could sharply reduce crime if the Government invested more in programs like child care and after-school programs to help kids get the right start, and that if we do not invest more now, we will pay far more later in crime and other costs.

When asked to rank the effectiveness of a number of crime-fighting approaches, the chiefs chose increasing investments in programs that help all children and youth get a good start as the most effective by a four-to-one ratio over trying more juveniles as adults or hiring additional police officers.

Senator, would you like me to conclude at this point?

Senator DODD. No, no. You finish up—as long as your name is "Flynn," Senator Kennedy will appreciate that—besides, he was chief of police in a city near Boston, too, Senator Kennedy.

Mr. FLYNN. I was the police chief in Chelsea until November 10th. It is nice to see you again, Senator.

Senator KENNEDY. Good, good. Nice to see you, too.

Mr. FLYNN. Demographics have shown us that the population of youth is going to sharply expand over the next decade. If age specific rates remain at current levels, we face a very sharp rise in serious criminal activity. UCR figures revealing a decease in the juvenile arrest rate for violent crime are likely temporary and are providing us with breathing space.

Youth arrests for violent crime are still significantly higher than they were in the 1980's. The fact remain that youth are creating violent crime, at younger ages, and at much higher rates than was the case in the early to mid-1980's. As the teen population expands over the next 10 years, the fear is there will be an explosion in the number of violent crimes committed by teens and young adults.

Congress and this administration have spent a considerable amount of money encouraging the adoption of community-oriented policing strategies around the country. what I would ask all of you to do is to learn from the lessons that your police officers have themselves learned as they have engaged in activities bringing them closer to the neighborhoods that they police. We spend a lot of time, and we have invested a lot of talent in trying to reestablish a relationship of trust between our police officers and the neighborhoods they patrol. This has been most critical in our inner cities, where our greatest economic and social diversity exists.

What we have learned time and again with depressing regularity is that we can very early on identify those kids who are headed for a life of trouble. Talk to any beat officer, for that matter, talk to any schoolteacher. We pretty quickly can identify kids who at an early age are engaging in self-destructive behaviors or inappropriate experimentation, yet there is very little for us to do with them.

In the city of Chelsea, where I had the privilege to be police chief before now, we were significantly affected by the problem of ethnic-based gangs, particularly Southeast Asian and Latino. It is a phenomenon that is now making itself known in the Washington met-

ropolitan area, as those of you who have read the papers recently about some recent problems in Fairfax County may know. What we found was that a very important component of a healthy response to that challenge was providing after-school activities for kids who are at risk of being recruited. Young people join gangs for very rational reasons. They join them for protection. They join them because of peer pressure. They frequently join them out of fear and frequently because for the first time, kids who do not have a strong family structure have an opportunity to be valued as individuals and have an opportunity to model their behaviors on someone they admire.

The challenge to our society right now is to provide those modeling opportunities in a healthier environment. We can successfully compete with gang recruiters, but we must demonstrate the will to do it, and I think you have heard from previous speakers today that have demonstrated a number of programs that have provided healthy opportunities for kids.

I think it is very important as we listen to a lot of the rhetoric demanding that we try all juveniles as adults and that we incarcerate them in adult prisons that we keep in mind that we have not been invaded by a race of space aliens. All these people that we are so afraid of are our children. Their names are known to your social workers, to your police officers, to your schoolteachers. And to the extent that we can identify them early and provide them with healthy opportunities that can insulate them from gang recruitment, I think we do them a service, but in the bigger picture, we will protect our society from a generation afflicted with a serious crime rate.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Flynn may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Chief, that is wonderful testimony. You will be pleased to know that in fact, Senator Conrad and Senator Kennedy have introduced major bills on the tobacco issue, and somewhere close to $15 billion of those revenues that come in are dedicated to child care issues and specifically, to this particular issue. So that we are taking the resources from tobacco, as you have suggested in your testimony, and applying them to some of the areas that make a difference in getting kids off the street corners. So we thank you for that testimony.

Senator DODD. I would now like to turn to my colleague from Massachusetts for his introduction of Mayor Menino. I have already given the mayor a glowing introduction; let us see if you can exceed what I have done for him. I have called him "my mayor."

Senator KENNEDY. Have they heard that in New Haven and Hartford? [Laughter.]

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank our witnesses for their presence and apologize for not being here earlier because there was the introduction of a bill with regard to naturalization just a little while ago.

I am first of all enormously appreciative of the leadership of the chairman of our Children's Caucus, Senator Dodd, who prior to the time that he came to the Senate and while in the Senate has been a real leader in the whole area of quality of life of children in this

country, from expectant mothers to well-baby care to Head Start programs, child care, family and medical leave and after-school programs. And the building of this case today by those who are giving testimony will be invaluable I know to Senator Dodd and certainly to all of us in terms of convincing our colleagues about the importance of this issue. So we thank all of those who have taken time away from work and families to join us today, and I particularly want to thank Chief Flynn for his comments as a police officer.

I will just take a moment of the committee's time to thank as well our Mayor of Boston, Mayor Menino, for his strong commitment to these after-school programs. Mayor Menino has been interested in and committed to this issue long before today, when it has become a part of the national agenda. Hopefully, we will be able to take positive steps to implement and enact it. But Mayor Menino has in a very important and significant way made this program a program that has life in the city of Boston, focusing on children who have had run-ins with the law and had very, very important success in virtually eliminating homicides for over 2 years in the city of Boston and now just one or two that have taken place in recent weeks, but has also been committed to ensuring that every community in Boston is going to have an after-school program, what he calls the "2 to 6 program."

I had a chance to visit in Boston just a little while ago the Little House, which has a very effective program working after school with children. We have another program called the MORE Initiative to find the various assets in the community and tie those into particular schools and after-school programs that would be of interest and value to children, a very creative and innovative program.

But the mayor now has national responsibilities, because he is not only the co-chair of the Mayor's Task Force on Public Schools, but he is now chairperson of youth, education and families for the National League of Cities, so he is the national spokesman for those who are most affected by these issues in the major cities of this country. It is not only a problem for major cities, but obviously for smaller communities and rural areas as well. And he has been tireless in working with us here to try to make sure that what we do here will tie into these programs in the major cities to make those programs effective and to help us—which is so important—and let us know what is working out there, so that can be replicated and duplicated. It is one thing for us to listen, but it is important to find out what is working out there, and he is someone who has a very important and significant program that is constantly undergoing review on the basis of parent and community involvement, as well as law enforcement, social work, and education involvement. So it has been an extraordinary experience, and I have certainly learned a great deal from it.

Mr. Chairman, when I mentioned to the mayor that you were holding this hearing, he said, "I will cancel everything if I can be of some help and assistance on this issue," and when we spoke earlier today, he said he wanted to come over and listen to those who would be testifying today. How many times over the course of 35 have I found someone who wants to listen to someone else; it is a rare quality. But that is the kind of mayor he is; he listens, and

that is why he is a beloved figure in the city of Boston, and we are very, very proud of him.

Senator DODD. I should have stated at the outset of these remarks that I am very appreciative of Senator Kennedy's kind comments about my work on behalf of children, but the pioneer in all of this, as everyone in this room knows, has been the Senator of Massachusetts, even before I got here, for years on just countless issues affecting children and families. So it is a pleasure once again to be sitting with him here at this table, and to welcome you, Mayor. We would be happy to receive your testimony.

Mr. MENINO. Thank you, Senator Dodd, and thank you Senator Kennedy for those remarks. The panelists that I sit with here are the practitioners out there, doing it every day, and they are really the ones who make it work for mayors and police chiefs throughout the country.

As co-chairman of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Task Force on Public Schools, I bring not only my own experience as Mayor of Boston, but the experience of other mayors attempting to provide safe and structured places for children to go after school.

Let me just put it into a little focus. There are 56,000 school age children between the ages of 5 and 14 in Boston, and only 4,000 after school program slots. Less than 10 percent of the kids in Boston are enrolled in after school programs because of lack of slots in our city.

In Boston, we have learned that the after-school program is one of the most powerful crime and delinquency prevention tools that we have. We have 30,000 teenagers who finish their school day before 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and with nothing to do and no one to watch them, they are bound to get into trouble. National statistics confirm this. Juvenile arrests for violent crime increase by 90 percent between the hours of 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., and research indicates that juvenile crime triples in the first hour after school ends each day.

But just as children have the potential to get into trouble, they also have the potential to flourish when provided with positive alternatives, safe and structured activities, and adults who care about their well being and success.

I know that most young people will absolutely make the right choice when given the chance. That is what brings me here today. We need to give more of our young people more chances to succeed. Finding the resources to provide quality programming to every child in need is perhaps the most daunting task facing America's cities today.

I have a summer youth program called the "Red Shirts," and we put 10,000 kids to work last summer. I put a program together for at risk kids. People say, well, these kids are in trouble, and they have problems and yeah. But I said let us try it. We put these young people to work for the summer, and after the summer was over, I sat down and talked with them. Do you know what these kids said to me? "This is the first opportunity we have had to get a real paycheck."

Do you know what they wanted to know? How do I get my high school diploma, and how do I go on to college? That is what some of these young people need.

In Boston, we are approaching the challenge with the same strategy that is at the heart of our juvenile crime prevention effort—effective partnerships in our city. Police, parents, clergy, neighborhood residents and merchants, children and teachers, have all worked together and share the credit for the declining youth violence rates in our city.

Now, as we continue to expand our after school system, we have made sure that everyone is at the table. Like you said, Senator, we were fortunate in 1995 to be chosen by the DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Foundation as one of three cities nationwide to develop an infrastructure to support comprehensive after school programs.

We have learned over the past 3 years that effective partnerships build quality programs. The Carnegie Corporation has identified the elements of top quality programs that really help children move forward academically and socially. Parent involvement and youth leadership are at the top of the list. Providing a mix of activities for youth is also important, because after school time is an opportunity to stimulate and challenge our children in ways that are different from the regular school day.

If we invest the resources and attention that quality after school programming demands, we will see the results, not just in declining crime rates, but in improved academic and social outcomes for our children. Linking after-school activities with lessons learned during the school day will also help children achieve the high standards demanded by local, State and national public school reform.

Finding the resources we need will be the ongoing challenge. January 1st of this year, I announced the Boston 2 to 6 initiative to galvanize support for increased after school programming. Through 2 to 6, the city will pay the costs of keeping all of our public school buildings open in the afternoons. We will also continue to provide funding so that children of low income working parents can attend before and after school programs, and we will continue to support programming at our network of 43 community centers throughout our city.

Finally, we are the only city in the country to devote local law enforcement block grant funds to after school programming for the second year in a row.

We are doing all that we can, but we need a permanent source of operating funds for these important programs. We are approaching the private sector, and we are thinking creatively about other ways to access resources.

I applaud the Federal Government's attention to after school programming, especially the America After School Act recently introduced by Senator Kennedy, as well as Senator Dodd's program. The America After School Act will help cities and towns expand their programs and ensure that after school programming becomes a key strategy for preventing juvenile crime and raising academic achievement across the Nation.

However, I must caution the committee on behalf of my fellow mayors that towns and cities should be allowed to build their after school programs in ways that work best for them. Give us the flexibility. New legislation should not mandate that public school buildings are the only appropriate sites for after school programming.

We have many successful programs cited in the Boston public schools, but we also have many successful programs in churches, community centers, YMCAs, and Boys and Girls Clubs. Each is deserving of Federal support.

We would also welcome the Federal Government's assistance in helping to build professional recognition for the staff of after-school and child care programs. Low pay, inadequate training and a lack of support cause many talented people to leave the field, forcing programs to contend with frequent staff turnovers and shortages. Quality programming depends on talented teachers. We need to find ways to better reward these important people for their work.

I want to thank you again, Senator Dodd, for asking me to testify here today. I applaud our Senator, Senator Kennedy, as well as the other members of the committee for their commitment to creating comprehensive after-school programs for youth. This is the most important thing we can do as we move forward. A few years ago, we were focused on crime, and now everybody is focused on education, because we all know that just focusing on crime did not do the job. We have got to get these kids at an early age, give them after school activities, because that is the most vulnerable time of day for our youngsters.

Both of you Senators are on the right track, and we need you to give some other Senators some religion and make them understand how important this is to the future of America.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Menino may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Mayor, for that excellent testimony. It was very compelling.

I want to associate myself with your comments about the flexibility. One reason we include the block grant approach—as Senator Kennedy knows, because he helped me do this 8 years ago with the child care block grant—is that it allows maximum flexibility. You are absolutely correct, it would be ridiculous for us on this side of the table here to try to fashion programs that will be as diverse as what Mr. Yonnie here and the Navajo Nation need—by the way, this is Eric's first trip out of Chinle; he has come here all the way from the Navajo Nation and will speak to us in a few minutes—and what you may need in Arlington or in Boston or in the State of Washington or the State of Georgia, as we have heard from Senator Oliver and others.

So I endorse that concept to allow that flexibility in small towns and cities; it needs that variation.

Finally, I am very intrigued with your idea of what to do with the private sector because I think this is a very important element in this. Senator Oliver from Georgia talked to us earlier about her efforts there to include them, the local, community based organizations like the Rotary Club and so on.

I am wondering what success you have had, Mayor, with the involvement of the private sector, because they clearly have a vested interest. They get it, they understand it. I think that often, they are wondering how they can fit in. They want to fit in, but they just do not know quite how to fit in.

What has been your success with that?

Mr. MENINO. We have had huge success in the city. If they want to fit in, we will make sure they fit in. John Hancock Financial Services started a program in the summertime with at-risk kids and continued it during the course of the school year. They took 70 kids and gave them jobs, gave them counseling, gave them mentors. Bank Boston puts about 120 kids into their program during the course of the school year, and that is important; and we have Fleet Bank.

We have a good business community in Boston that wants to get involved in our schools because they understand that if kids are not educated, there is nobody for their work force. That is why our business community is so invested in our schools today.

Senator DODD. And of course, you have had tremendous success in bringing down your crime rate. In fact, every chief of police that I have spoken with, when they hear about these curfews after 11 p.m. at night that many of our States have advocated, they understand what the motivations are, but they always tell me that if you really want to make a difference with kids, that is not the problem time. The problem time, as you have pointed out, Chief, is from 2 to 6 in the afternoon.

Mr. FLYNN. In Chelsea, we readjusted our foot patrol assignments once that fact became clear to us statistically. Like everyone else, we put our foot patrols out particularly between 8 and midnight, because those are the high crime periods, but the streets were teeming with kids between 3 and 8, and we were missing that opportunity, so we actually redeployed our people in response to that statistic.

Senator DODD. And that has been your experience as well, Mayor?

Mr. MENINO. No question about it. With curfews, you punish a lot of good kids because they cannot have after-school jobs and things like that. But the bad kids will be out there in spite of the curfew. It is the good kids you are concerned about and how they can continue their activities. The curfew is one of those bandaid approaches. When people say, "We have a curfew in our city, and we are going to solve our problems," it does not solve any problems.

Senator DODD. I do not know what your constraints are, Ted, but do you have any questions or comments at this point?

Senator KENNEDY. Yes, just briefly.

Mayor, can you tell us again about the reaction of the parents and the affordability issue? You and I visited the Little House and listened to those parents talk about the importance of after-school programs. What can you tell us about what the parents tell you about the importance of this program and also about the affordability issue which relates to what Senator Dodd has mentioned about getting the private sector involved?

Mr. MENINO. That is the biggest issue, Senator, is the affordability of day care after school and programs like that. That is why the city is stepping in, because it goes up to $150, and some of these folks have been taken off welfare and cannot afford $30 a week. That is why the after-school programs that you folks are putting forward are so important, because they will give them the ability to have a safe haven for their children.

We have some programs in our city where we have taken some of our block grant money to subsidize after-school slots—but you heard my earlier testimony, that only 10 percent of kids have the ability to go to those slots in our city. So that is a big issue, Senator. We saw that up at Little House when we were out there a few weeks ago.

Senator KENNEDY. In Boston, Mr. Chairman, the support for some of these programs terminates at the age of 12 or 13.

Mr. MENINO. I think it is 12 years old, Senator, that is correct.

Senator KENNEDY. There was a proposal to have it continue some time ago, and people said, no, we are not going to do that; we will just do it for the very youngest children. And the mayor will remember sitting in that room when we were there, hearing that mother talk about how she is so concerned and worried about what she is going to do when her child turns 13 and will lose eligibility in terms of support and what it has meant in terms of her child.

Mr. MENINO. It gave her the ability to go back to work, and when she loses that slot, she will go back on welfare. It is a circle, and we have just got to plug in those gaps and stop talking about some other issues and get back to what American is really all about—helping people, helping families.

Senator DODD. They mayor heard, too, from Jim Horne in Bridgeport and others, that that 13-14 age is the most difficult. A little younger than that, they will take more direction, and the independence has not yet begun to emerge, and they are there because they want to be there at that point. At a younger age, you can keep them there, but when they reach 13 and 14, unless you can relate the program to them, they will walk on you; they have no reason, and you cannot force them to be there. That makes it much more difficult.

Mr. MENINO. If I could just comment on that issue, we have a program at the Shelburne Center, the REAP program, where Reebock comes in and works with the kids on Saturday. Their professional staff come in and tutor the kids. It is a basketball program, where they have 2 hours of basketball, but before they set foot on the basketball court, they have to go through 2 hours of educational training. It works out very well, and if you track these kids, they are doing very well in school. So that is the partnership we are talking about.

Senator DODD. Great.

Senator KENNEDY. Finally, if I could, as you remember, Mayor, the interest of those kids—you and I have walked through that place—and they were not interested in the fact that you and I were there; they were focused on photography, they were learning home services in terms of how children can help their parents with cooking and so on, and there was just a wide variety of practical and important kinds of skills and confidence-building exercises, as well photography and other training that could perhaps help some of those kids find jobs in a local area photography store.

But the educational component is an important aspect, is it not, Mayor?

Mr. MENINO. No question about it. Education does not just happen in the 5 hours you are in a classroom. It happens before school,

after school and on weekends, and that is why this is so very important, because it supplements what happens in the classroom.

Senator DODD. That is great. By the way, the existing child care block grant can only provide assistance to children up to the age of 13, and what we have done in the bill is extended that through age 15, to be able to pick up exactly the kinds of situations you have been talking about.

Well, Mayor, we thank you immensely for your testimony.

Mr. MENINO. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Cynthia Kiefer is the parent of a child with special needs, and I have already mentioned our star witness, Eric Yonnie from the Navajo Nation, who has come a long way—not only come a long way in distance, but has come a long way in his own life already.

Ms. Kiefer, let us take your testimony, and then we will turn to Eric, and we will have a few more questions for you.

Ms. KIEFER. Good morning, Chairman Dodd and other distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am honored by the opportunity to testify before this Senate Subcommittee on Children and Families on an issue that is tremendously important to me, my family and countless other families with special needs children around the country.

I am a full-time employee with Columbia HCA in Nashville, TN. I am married and the proud mother of two wonderful boys, Drew and Brendan. Drew, who is 11 years old and my oldest son, has been severely mentally delayed and nonverbal since his infancy. Brendan, who is 8, is in third grade.

Today's hearing on school-age care is critically important to me. As I sought to find caring, nurturing out-of-school time activities and children's programs for my two children, the dichotomy between the options available for special needs children and children without special needs and the high cost associated with special needs care versus care for nonspecial needs children is alarming. How can so many options be available and yet so few accepting of the special needs child? Our home environment is the same for our entire family, so why can't quality programs during the nonschool hours be available to all children, including those with special needs?

Eleven years ago, I anticipated the birth of our first child with such joy and happiness and hope for a promising future. Three months after Drew's birth, I learned of his disabilities, and I was devastated. I could not bring myself to even talk about it for 3 years. Yet it is with a mother's love and devotion that I am here in front of you today, talking about a subject so near and dear to my heart, but yet so difficult to discuss.

If Drew were standing here beside me, his smile would warm your hearts and the hearts of everyone in this room. It would not matter that he cannot talk, he cannot feed himself, he cannot dress himself, cannot potty himself, cannot bathe himself—indeed, cannot do anything by himself.

Let me tell you what he can do, though. He can teach you patience. He can show you love. He can make you cherish each moment, and he can be your friend.

Like so many of the people I have encountered over the years, I too focused on what my child could not do. I did so for 3 years. I had to learn the hard way that every person has a gift to share and that some gifts are seen more easily than others.

Our family works hard to support Drew's everyday needs, and Drew's needs must always come first. Simple things like going out to dinner together or going to church as a family are impossible for us. We desperately need good, appropriate school-age care that meets his needs and is available for our use.

While looking for school-age care for Drew, I was met continually with apprehensive glances, verbal denials and rejections from a whole host of child care providers. I searched throughout the Nashville area at schools, churches, homes and independent child care sites. Would-be providers either did not have the capacity to deal with special needs children, had space for only a limited number of special needs children, or were simply too expensive. There were many options for my younger son, Brendan, but very few choices for Drew.

After some searching, thankfully, I was able to find quality school-age care for Drew. I found it at the Green Hills Family YMCA. I was attracted to the YMCA for many reasons that I think are fundamental to a successful environment for all types of school-age children, including those with special needs. They are, first, that every child is treated equally. Although Drew has special needs, at the YMCA he is mainstreamed with other kids in the program. Furthermore, the fee I pay the YMCA for Drew's care is no different from the fees parents pay who do not have special needs children—$37 a week.

Second, the children are supported. when Drew is at the YMCA, he is assigned an individual teacher who works to meet his particular needs. This sort of one-on-one instruction is expensive and, as I understand it, costs the YMCA approximately $250 a week. Fortunately, the YMCA is able to subsidize the c[illegible] of special needs children.

Third, there is open communication between parents and staff. Since Drew is nonverbal, it is tremendously important that there is open communication between the YMCA staff and me. There is genuinely a shared sense of responsibility and accountability between us toward providing the best care for my child.

Fourth, there are programs that promote character and values development. In this program, the children are encouraged to model the YMCA's character development principles of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. These principles are incorporated into the everyday after-school activities of all the children.

Fifth, support. I know that the love and support that Drew receives from his YMCA caregiver is mirrored throughout the organization, from the YMCA president to the front desk staff and all the way through the organization.

In summary, I have sought to paint for you a picture of what parents with special needs children face when seeking quality school-age care options for their children. I am fortunate to have the YMCA in my community. But YMCAs and other community organizations like them could do so much more with your help.

I strongly encourage the subcommittee to support and pass Federal policies that recognize that providing care for school-age children with special needs is more expensive than serving kids without special needs.

Specifically, you could help by providing financial incentives for community organizations to serve special needs children, by encouraging and supporting, perhaps through scholarships, specialized training for staff who work with special needs children, and dedicating a certain percentage of school-age care funds for special needs children.

That is why I am tremendously supportive of the components of Senator Dodd's legislation, the Child Care ACCESS Act, that increase the supply and quality of school-age care and ensure the availability and quality of care for special needs children.

Again, I appreciate this opportunity to come before you, and I welcome your questions.

Senator DODD. Cynthia, thank you immensely. I know it is not easy to come here and talk about your wonderful 11-year-old boy after, as you said, spending almost 3 years in denial and not wanting to talk about it. But I wish everyone in the Senate could have been here to hear you describe what wonderful assets your child has and teaches to you and your family and others who come in contact with him; and whatever he may not be able to do, there are other things he can do. And certainly it is reflected in your face and in your testimony here today.

Ms. KIEFER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. There are hundreds of thousands of parents like you, as you know. I presume that at first, you thought you were all alone, and then as you went out, you found that you were not alone and that there are many people who struggle with this every, single day.

I have some questions, and I am going to come back, because frankly, we have dropped the ball overall, in my view, at the Federal level on special needs after-school. We made some pretty strong commitments to the American public back a number of years ago about how much we would step forward and help our local communities, and we have never, ever met that obligation. As a result, not only do families feel it, but the communities do. It creates a lot of tension in small towns particularly, where there are only a handful of special needs children and costs can be high, and resentment builds up. It should not be that way. So I want to come back and talk to you a bit about that, but I am very, very pleased that you are here with us today.

Senator DODD. Eric, you are our star. You have come the longest distance. This is your first time in Washington. I hope you are going to spend a couple of days with us here; you are not going to go right back are you?

Mr. YONNIE. No. I will be here for a couple of days.

Senator DODD. Good. I think it is important that you take a look around and see how your city is doing here. These are your buildings, you know.

We are anxious to hear what you have to say, and we are really pleased you are with us. It means a lot to us to have you here with us today.

Mr. YONNIE. My instructor is going to go first.

Senator DODD. OK. Sharon, welcome as well.

Ms. JONES. thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to be here, honorable Senator Dodd and honorable Senator Kennedy. Good morning.

My name is Sharon Jones, and I am the parent involvement coordinator for Chinle School District, which is the largest school district on the Navajo Nation. I also volunteer my services with Save the Children.

About a year ago, we began to work with Save the Children and the National Institute of Out-of-School Time in providing after-school programming for our community. On behalf of our community partner, Save the Children, and our Chinle after-school program, I am honored to be here today to introduce a young man who is a very special participant in our after-school program—Eric Yonnie. .

But first of all, I would like to give you a little bit of background about our after-school program in a rural community, working with the Native Americans that we serve.

In collaboration and conjunction with entities such as NIOST, the National Institute of Out-of-School Time, Save the Children, the Department of Youth and Community Services, and AmeriCorps volunteers, we were able to have an after-school program in our small community of Chinle.

Our program is located at the Chinle Junior High School, our local junior high school in our community. The center is available to every youth during the critical hours of 3 to 7 p.m., 4 days a week, Monday through Thursday, where we are able to serve hundreds of youth every week. The youth attending our after-school program confront many challenges indigenous to our rural communities—the remoteness of our community means that our schoolbuses travel an average of 2½ hours a day in severe weather conditions including snow and mud, and the increasing gang violence and substance abuse.

Until we started the after-school program a year ago, there had been no organized program planned for our young people during the after-school hours, so we began to work with these entities to begin an after-school program. Last year, with the help of Save the Children, we were able to start a comprehensive after-school program at the Chinle Center.

Our activities currently include tutoring, mentoring, cultural programs, recreation activities, computer literacy, family workshops, parent, youth and community involvement workshops, parenting classes, and summer programs.

Chinle is now a community partner of a nationwide initiative launched by Save the Children called the "Web of Support." The Web of Support initiative includes dozens of community-based after-school programs located in urban and rural communities across the country, whose three key objectives include providing our youth with caring adults as mentors and tutors, ensuring them of a place to go after school, and designing constructive activities to engage and nurture them.

Our goal in Chinle and the Navajo Nation is to promote and increase the positive development of children whom we serve in a

safe environment with nurturing adults. Our people in the Navajo Nation thank you for your continued leadership, Senator Dodd and members of the subcommittee, in meeting the needs of our children and our families in this great Nation. The legislation you are proposing will benefit many children in rural communities, including the unique Native American community that we are representing today.

Now it is my great pleasure to introduce a dynamic young man, Eric Yonnie, from Chinle, AZ.

Mr. YONNIE. Thank you, Sharon.

Thank you very much, Senator Dodd, for allowing me to speak on behalf of the kids from the Navajo Nation and other kids who are in after-school programs.

My name is Eric Yonnie. I am 16 years old and a freshman at Chinle High School. My family lives in Chinle, AZ, and I am the youngest of five children.

When I was 13 years old and in junior high school, I began to get into a lot of trouble. My parents think education is very important and both work in the education profession. But I was more interested in what my siblings and my friends were doing than I was in school work.

I began skipping and failing my classes. I had to repeat the eighth grade. I would hang out with my friends at the local housing projects during and after school, and eventually, my friends and I began taking and selling drugs and getting into trouble with the law.

The trouble I was having was not unusual for the kids in our community. There was nothing to do and nowhere to go after school. The nearest movies, skating rinks, bowling alleys, shopping malls are at least an hour away from Chinle, and unless you took the schoolbus home immediately after school, there was no way to get anywhere until you were old enough to drive.

Then Ms. Jones began our after-school program with the help of Save the Children. Ms. Jones asked to talk to me 1 day at school and told me she wanted me to come by and check out the learning center, so I did. She told me that I needed to get out of junior high and catch up with my classes, and to think about my future.

I started to go regularly after school. Ms. Jones and other adults volunteering at the center helped me with my homework, especially math and science, which are now my favorite subjects. But it was not the homework help I needed so much as a place where I could concentrate with other kids around doing the same thing.

Before the center was open, if I did go straight home, I was most often alone except for my grandmother, whom we took care of; no one noticed what I did, and there was no one to talk to until much later in the evening when my family would get home.

At the center, we do our homework with tutors for the first hour and a half. Then we choose to do organized sports or arts and crafts or take computer training. We also have family counseling, which my parents and I participate in, and if you had been in the kind of trouble with the law that I was in, the center will give you counseling with adults who are trained to help you.

This fall, Ms. Jones asked me if I would be a tutor to the younger kids at the center, because she thought I had become a good role

model and because, I am proud to say, my grades were good enough to meet the center's requirements for tutoring. I am involved in a series of tutoring training where I learn about ways to work with my peers.

In fact, when I started going to the center, I had a 1.5 grade average in junior high. This year, my first year of high school, my grade point average rose to 3.5. I have perfect attendance at school, and I am taking college preparation classes. Right now, my goal is to go to an automotive technician school in Wyoming after I graduate from high school.

Finally, I want you to know that I am the father of a baby boy. I am taking parenting classes at the center and taking full responsibility for my child and for his future. It is a big responsibility, and part of what I want to do in helping others at the center is to let them know, through my experience and my example, about the great challenges and consequences of being a father at 16 years old.

Thank you very much.

Senator DODD. Well, Eric, we thank you very, very much. Aside from being here, which is very, very helpful, it is a remarkable journey that you have been on in the last few years. And it is obviously wonderful to have someone like Ms. Jones, but you decided to make some changes in your life, too, and without that process, it just does not happen. So wanting to make the changes, and then having a place where you can make the changes—both elements are needed, and I am pleased to hear you say that.

And I am delighted that you are becoming a tutor. I think it is terrific, because you can relate much more effectively than others of us who are older can. Despite our good intentions, we have a hard time reaching younger people. Because you can relate to them more directly, you can have a more profound impact on their decisionmaking process, so I am very pleased that you have done that, and congratulations to you. It is very commendable. Again, I am so glad you are here with us today.

Mr. YONNIE. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Chief, I loved your description of space aliens. I think this is something that people all across the country need to hear, that we are not talking about space aliens, we are talking about our children and trying to make a difference in their lives.

What sort of reaction do you get in the community? You are a relatively new chief of police. All of us in this area know Arlington and know it well; it is a neighboring community here in Washington. Is that attitude reflected by your own officers, that you have been able to detect so far, in Arlington? They are the ones on the line every day. They are dealing with tough kids, and I can appreciate from a personal standpoint when someone says, "Listen, I have someone here who is just a hardened case, and you guys can sit up there and talk about after-school programs and all this stuff, but with all due respect, I have a problem here that has to be dealt with by a juvenile justice system or a justice system." How do you respond to some of those concerns when they are raised—and not illegitimate concerns, I might point out.

Mr. FLYNN. Well, I am fortunate in a way. I learned upon arrival here that sometimes Arlington is referred to as "the People's Re-

public." From my standpoint, that is not a bad thing inasfar as it indicates a political will to consider alternatives other than incarceration for social problems.

There is a supportive environment in Arlington County for proactive initiatives involving youth. As a matter of fact, even as we speak, there is a major effort on the part of the county board to try to put together a youth initiative that is aimed not only at preventing gang activity but at fostering positive alternatives for kids at risk. It is a county-based, county-wide initiative, and it is in the planning stages, and thy are being very assertive about it.

As to the issue of how to respond to the officers, the fact remains there are hard cases out there. The best predicter of adult criminal behavior is juvenile criminal behavior in that one extreme of the juvenile delinquency spectrum is hardcore kid criminals who are problems as youth, are bullies, are into trouble early and often, and seem to be beyond our best efforts to help them.

But that is a small minority of the challenge. The bigger challenge is those kids who are at risk for being victims as well as being drawn into the wake of the pseudo-leaders who, by misbehaving publicly and often, sometimes attract adherence because they are able to stand up to authority, they are able to espouse youth values, negative as they may be, and become kind of role models in some communities.

As I learned in Chelsea, and I see the same dynamics down here, the kids who are most vulnerable to the blandishments of gangs are the kids from the newly-emerging ethnic groups, the ones who are most ill-at-ease in a new society, the ones who are most overwhelmed by what they encounter and are therefore most vulnerable to recruiting pitches which offer them cohesion, which offer them peer support, which offer them mutual protection to the extent that they perceive that they need it. Some kids join gangs because they are afraid of the gang. I mean, it is not like rushing a fraternity; it is like, Join us, or you are going to be sorry you did not, sort of thing.

So that particularly with our young Asian communities and our young Central American/Latino communities, this is an issue that we can very much head off. We had a significant problem in Chelsea with a group called the Almighty Latin King Nation, which is basically a prison-based Latino gang that is nationwide in its scope. They made a major recruiting effort in our small city, and despite what people expected, we were able to successfully as a community working together resist that recruitment effort, and in fact, they went away, which had not happened before. A key component of that was the community trust that we were able to build up as a police department working closely with the parents and explaining to them just what this threat to their kids was—because it presented itself as a positive, ethnic pride-based organization.

But secondarily, there were a number of youth at-risk initiatives already existing in our community—an outfit called ROCA, another outfit called Choice Through Education, the Boys and Girls Clubs—that were very instrumental in what is known as the intervention phase of gang disruption. Ideally, you want to prevent gangs from forming through education, and there is a role for enforcement activities when the cross the line, but the toughest part is interven-

tion, and that requires knowing the names of these kids, knowing who they are, where they live, knowing who their people are, being able to reach out to their support network and pull them out of gangs or pull them back from that precipice.

That is where I became a real fan of after-school activities. They do make a difference, they do reduce the opportunity for gang activity, and it is something that we are police chiefs generally greatly encourage and commend you for encouraging.

Senator DODD. That is terrific. That is a wonderful comment.

Ms. Kiefer, in regard to special needs children, I mentioned to you briefly some of the questions I get from mayors in small towns particularly, where the costs can be tremendous. There was a mayor of one small town in Connecticut who talked about something like $100,000 for one child in special needs. In a small town with a small budget and so on, that creates pressures, and it created some hostility in that town with parents of children who did not have special needs. And it is not that they are evil—it is just that they do not understand. It comes out of their pockets.

So that is my view, first of all, we need to live up to that commitment. We provide about 8 percent of the funding for special needs in this country—that is, the Federal Government does—and we promised 40 percent a long time ago and have never gotten close to that. If we could get up to 40 percent, as we said we would, I think we could alleviate a lot of those pressures that exist in local communities.

I wonder what kinds of other obstacles you encountered in your search to demonstrate how far we still have to go to adequately take care of children with special needs?

Ms. KIEFER. Certainly, that is a very good question, because oftentimes, I would seek child day care and after-school care situations and would come across allotments of perhaps two openings—it was mainly two—and they were always filled with the same children year after year after year. So it is very difficult, once your child reaches the age of 5 or 6, to migrate them into a good, functional day care system. That is why the Y was so good at accepting and incorporating what my child needed along with all the other children, and what a wonderful experience it has been for the other children to build their character by being a part of helping my son. That is such a rewarding and enriching experience for these children, and I really think the programs that open up these openings for special needs children—I agree that it is very difficult, and some children are more difficult than others even with special needs—there need to be some incentives for those centers to include and incorporate these children.

In answering your question, I would say that the door is usually very politely closed to me. "We do not have enough space." "Our spaces are already filled." And as a parent, it is very difficult to walk through the door of a day care situation or a child care situation and see people look at your child like, "Please, do not let him come here." You can just read their faces, and it is hurtful to the parents, but it is difficult, because for every five that turn you down, there might be one.

For instance, I am already looking at options for summer programs now, and in the Nashville community, there is a total of

nine available options to me. That is all—nine—and some of them are only for severely handicapped children. And it is important to mainstream these children and to include them in activities with their age appropriate peers and siblings.

Senator DODD. How much of it is a factor of education and training of the staff? Your son obviously has some unique and special needs, and often, we find that the staff do not get adequate training, and it may just be daunting to take on a child with the level of needs that your child has.

Ms. KIEFFER. Exactly, and I think that that really needs to be addressed. Specialized training for the staff is very important, and somehow we need to incorporate that, build incentives in there and encourage people to do that.

I was speaking to someone in the audience earlier today, and they asked me a similar question, and my response was that if there are no incentives for these people to improve and take on these additional challenges, they go to the easier jobs. They do not want to take care of these special children; they just do not want to do it.

The training definitely needs to be addressed, and the YMCA is picking up that responsibility for me, which is one less thing I have to do as a parent, not only subsidizing that for me but providing it for me as well.

Senator DODD. Well, I am glad you found it. The YMCA is a wonderful organization, and I know it has made a difference for you.

Eric, you had some very good testimony. If you could just tell me what are the most important things you learned from being in the center?

Mr. YONNIE. Confidence, for one, in myself; staying away from peer pressure; learning to know right from wrong.

Senator DODD. Have your parents been involved with you through this process?

Mr. YONNIE. Yes. Since I entered the program, they have been helpful.

Senator DODD. That is great. Was that a very important factor? That was a big part of it?

Mr. YONNIE. Yes.

Senator DODD. So they understood what was going on, too.

Mr. YONNIE. They finally understood.

Senator DODD. How about your older brothers and sisters?

Mr. YONNIE. My older brothers and sisters are doing pretty good right now.

Senator DODD. Have they been helpful and supportive of you, too?

Mr. YONNIE. Yes. They finally started getting helpful and supportive.

Senator DODD. That is great. So you have a good family that is helping out in all of this.

Mr. YONNIE. Yes.

Senator DODD. That is a big help. I think the word "confidence" is a big word. I thought you might say some other things, but I think that is a pretty good choice to list first having confidence in yourself as a person—confidence to say no to drugs, confidence to say no to alcohol and tobacco, confidence to go to work. That word

really says it all, in a way, and I think you have got a lot of confidence.

I am very impressed with your sense of direction, your sense of purpose, and I expect you to become a great leader in the Navajo Nation.

Mr. Youngin. Auto mechanics.

Senator Inouye. Auto mechanics is a pretty good choice, too. Given the condition of our automobiles in this country, we could use you very much, I would think.

Mr. Youngin. Thank you.

Again, as I told the first panel, I could spend literally all afternoon with all three of you. I am very impressed with the tremendous work that all of you do.

Chief, it is a pleasure to hear you. I know that you are not alone in this. I talk to my chiefs in Connecticut, who have been terrific on these issues, and across my State, I meet with them quite frequently and talk about the community policing efforts, which you made reference to, the beat and the patrols.

Cynthia, you know you are not alone in this, and we are grateful to you for coming today and sharing your story.

And Kris, again, we thank you and Sharon for being here.

I want to thank our staff. Caryn Wilts did a terrific job. Joanne Ireland does wonderful work, as well as Mandy Rossler, Mary Ellen McGuire, Diana Da Silva, and Stephanie Monroe from Senator Coats' staff, who has very graciously allowed me to chair this hearing. It is unique to allow a Democrat to chair a hearing when the Republicans are in control, so I did not offer any bills. I did not try to cause any coups d'etat here in chairing the hearing today.

Senator Coats cares very much about the issue of after school care, and he was of major help to me on the Family and Medical Leave Act when we drafted that and is deeply committed to seeing us do something about after school care, so I look forward to working with him and other members of the committee on this issue.

[The appendix follows.]

APPENDIX

Testimony Before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Children and Families/Committee on Labor and Human Resources
Senator Christopher J. Dodd, Chair
By Georgia State Senator Mary Margaret Oliver
Thursday, March 7, 1996

Chairman Dodd and members of the Committee:

My name is Mary Margaret Oliver. I am a State Senator from Georgia and I appreciate this opportunity to speak to you about one of the most critical issues facing the youth of my state and indeed, our nation: after school care. In short, the issue is the lack of after school care programs.

I speak today on behalf of a half million Georgia kids who need high quality, age-appropriate and accessible after school care, and on behalf of millions more nationwide.

I speak today as a Georgia resident who is proud that we have stepped forward as a national leader in after school programs.

I also speak for parents, sometimes single parents, who cannot be at home for their kids during the critical hours between 2:00 and 6:00pm.

Calling these three hours "critical" is not a rhetorical device to get attention. These three hours are literally critical. As numerous studies have demonstrated, they are prime time for kids to get in trouble. Alcohol and drug abuse, adolescent pregnancies, crimes committed by kids and crimes committed against kids, all have soared in disturbing disproportion between 2:00 and 6:00pm.

I am sure you have heard or will hear before these hearings are concluded, from many experts on children and adolescent issues. I am not one of those experts. I am, first, a concerned citizen of Georgia keenly interested in the youth of our State and our nation, and second, a State legislator with the opportunity to help shape and help fund—let me repeat that—help fund programs that address after school care issues.

Let me tell you briefly about some of the things we are doing in Georgia. Let me tell you about a small program that should be big, about a local program that should be national, about an exceptional program that should be the norm.

I am speaking of the "3:00 Project."

The "3:00 Project" is an initiative of the Georgia School Care Association (GSACA), a private non-profit organization working to meet the after school and summer care needs of middle school students throughout Georgia.

The "Project" began in the winter of 1995 in three Georgia cities, with the help of a $100,000 start-up grant that several of my colleagues in the Georgia legislature and I worked hard to secure. Now it has been expanded to ten cities including Macon, Athens, Savannah, Decatur, Atlanta, Columbus, Americus, Albany, Cordele and Statesboro.

Funded by state grants and various non-profit foundations, the "3:00 Project" is currently operating after school programs in 17 middle school and serving over 1,000 students per year.

The success of the "3:00 Project" is directly related to a unique combination of adult supervised, age appropriate activities in four key areas:

- Community Service Learning - where youth are provided structured opportunities to "connect" with their communities through serving at local food banks, cleaning streets and public area, helping at senior citizen center and similar activities
- Academic Reinforcement - where students are trained and participate in a variety of exercises and activities to strengthen academic achievement
- Social/Leisure/Recreation - where young people are provided opportunities to learn and practice social skills in a safe environment through a variety of athletic and recreational activities
- Communication Strategies - where students interact in small groups to learn rules, process managing differences and similar activities in order to develop successful interpersonal skills

While it is impossible to document the bad things that did not happen to participating kids because of the "3:00 Project," a comprehensive evaluation completed last spring showed that participants overwhelmingly believed they were safer, and parents agreed. School attendance improved across the board, and majority of the students earned better grades. Finally, parents and teacher reported fewer behavior problems, more cooperation with adults and a marked improvement in following rules.

Thanks in great measure to the demonstrable success of the "3:00 Project," and again with the help of several colleagues, I was able this year session to get through the Georgia Legislature a $1 million appropriation as "seed money" to develop new after school programs focused on middle school age children.

The success of the "3:00 Project," ladies and gentlemen, is the good news.

The bad news is that for every child we are helping in Georgia, there are over 100 we cannot help. And that, despite the fact that Georgia is a national leader in after school programs and initiatives.

Inadequate funding, of course, is a key limitation. But of equal importance, and perhaps a prime cause of inadequate funding, is the absence of a national policy on after school care and related issues. Without a comprehensive national policy, what we have is disjointed, uncoordinated and inadequately funded programs and initiatives scattered through the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Justice.

I am encouraged that this policy vacuum has been noticed and that the national dialogue concerning after school care has reached the White House and the Congress.

President Clinton's inclusion of $40 million in the current federal budget to fund the 21st Century Learning Center program (up from a minuscule $1 million in previous years) is a significant step forward, and testifies to the growing seriousness with which the President and the Congress view this issue.

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And, of course, Senator Kennedy's introduction of the American After School Act a few days ago gives additional and encouraging evidence of Congressional interest and concern.

As you move this process forward, as you gather evidence and information and recommendations from across the United States, I respectfully urge you to consider the following as part of the framework for the work to come.

We need to develop a national consciousness of after school care as an integral part of a complete education for our children.

We need to document the issue and the need for these programs with solid, well-funded research to serve as the basis for everything else we do.

We need to recognize that funds dedicated to after-school care programs represent an investment, not just in the future of our children, but in the present peace, safety and quality of life of our families and our communities.

And we need to forge a national policy that will guide a comprehensive effort involving national, state and local governments as well as the private sector, to develop and implement mandatory, not discretionary, after-school and related programs.

Day in and day out, those of us in public life hear about conditions in our cities, in our schools, in our neighborhoods that place our youth at risk. I submit to you that this often-heard phrase "youth at risk" is never more true than every working day, all across America, between the hours of 3:00 and 6:00pm.

I thank you for the attention you are giving this critical issue and for the opportunity to add my voice to those who speak for our children.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANET FRIELING

My name is Janet Frieling. I am the Learners Project Director for School's Out Consortium/YWCA in Seattle, Washington. School's Out is a community partnership organization dedicated to improving quality and promoting professionalism in out of school time care programs throughout Washington State. The majority of my job focuses on training and supervising 31 professionals who provide 3,600 hours of quality enhancement training and technical assistance either directly in programs or at community workshops. In addition, School's Out works very closely with our local community college to ensure that the needs of school age care professionals are being addressed in college based or neighborhood classes.

I celebrate and am honored at the opportunity to address the issues raised as well as

opportunities ahead. I would like to thank each of the members here today for showing the true

color to spread. The reason flowers are the very important value is welcomed by everyone in

the field. Program directors, staff, parents and the children and would we serve have been

working for the national flower for a long time.

School age care programs provide supervision, guidance, and activities for children and

youth ages five to fourteen or they out of school time. These programs operate in urban,

rural and suburban communities, serve diverse populations and operate under a wide

variety of auspices, including public schools, community centers, churches, YMCA's,

YWCA's, Community Action Agencies, park services, libraries, institutional colleges, and other

not for profit agencies and child care centers. These programs serve as valuable

prevention strategies in communities, ensure that parents can work without the worry that

their children, and promote youth development to ensure that our children's future is

bright.

When spring and summer the comes, I would like to ask each of you to imagine for just a

moment a beautiful flower garden. Now, in this garden, you see beautiful blooming

flowers of many varieties. These flowers represent the many types of programs that serve

children and youth ages 5 - 14 during their out of school hours. As with the flowers in any

garden, there are many types of programs designed to meet the many needs of the children

and families that serve.

There, in some of areas of the garden, imagine that there are very few flowers due to a lack

of attention to this area of the garden. This is true in the field of school-age care as well

because not all communities have resources to offer children the opportunity to attend

quality programs.

Think for a moment about all the things it takes to keep such a garden blooming

throughout the year. Water, sun, quality soil, and fertilizer are all needed, but these are

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keep that in first place, a room we can go. Likewise, to keep school-age care programs flourishing all year long, many different components must be in place. Programs must be accessible to families in their neighborhoods, meet specific needs of the families they serve, be of high quality and be affordable for families to access. Quality programs will utilize a variety of resources to ensure that the costs remain in the budget of the families they serve. In addition, a quality program will have well trained staff who can keep it growing and blooming to even greater potential.

I have been asked to speak about the training component and share with you a model that we have developed in Seattle. School's Out Consortium and our many community partners have found an effective training model that is delivered to staff in a variety of different methods. As in the garden analogy, it takes many things working to "grow" quality programs and many of those things are not visible to parents, the community, and policy makers, but are critical to ensuring that the children in the program have the highest quality of program to attend during the 80% of hours that children and youth are not in school.

Realizing that the staff in the programs are of diverse ages, backgrounds, experience levels, and commitment, School's Out Consortium has found that the most effective way to provide training is by offering many different courses and opportunities for professional development.

In the on-site training model, trainers are matched directly to a program. These trainers spend anywhere from 25-50 hours per year at the program site working with staff, modeling appropriate practices, working with the director to develop marketing or fund raising plans, linking the program to community resources, or strengthening a program's cultural relevancy component. In addition, trainers help programs work to meet quality standards, meet licensing requirements, or other contract requirements. This model has

been utilized for the past seven years, and this comment from a community center director sums up how a recipient of the on-site training views this service delivery: "I don't know what we would do without our School's Out trainer. She has helped us with everything from rearranging our program space to helping us better serve a population of kids that includes a high percentage of children with special needs. She is the greatest, and we wouldn't be as high a quality of program without her!"

In addition, School's Out trainers have helped programs in the national pilot program for a national accreditation system. They help enabled programs to participate in a more thoughtful and strategic way than programs without a support system. This system is about to be launched as the first ever school-age care specific accreditation system by the National School-age Care Alliance.

The community workshop allows School's Out Consortium to provide professional training to a wider audience on topics that are more universal to staff working in out-of-school time care programs. Workshops have covered such topics as volunteer recruitment, behavior management, programming for older youth, how to incorporate anti-violence and anti-bias practices into their programming, how to provide culturally relevant programming, and a variety of other more global topic areas. This method ensures that staff have several opportunities throughout the year to learn from a variety of professionals, network with other staff who share common concerns and issues, and learn the latest techniques in program improvement. This continual delivery methods also underlines the importance of a continual development of one's skills and knowledge.

The Seattle *MOST Initiative*, a national initiative led in Seattle by School's Out in partnership with Child Care Resource and Referral, Seattle Central Community College, and the City of Seattle has improving program quality as one of its top goals. Seattle was one of three cities in the nation to participate in the *MOST Initiative*. To that end, a

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mentor project was developed with Seattle Community College to provide professional development opportunities for staff and to increase their career options. Each candidate was paired with an appropriate mentor for a one year program to gain valuable experience, knowledge and skills from someone who has worked in the field at least 2 years. This program has had tremendous results. A recent evaluation done on this particular project reported that 79% of the students reported knowing a "great deal after the experience. One person stated: " It is always hard to feel like my work is respected by the community as a whole, but this program improves my outlook somewhat because of the chance to share and relate with other people in the profession." Another stated that the program made him feel like he was part of something bigger than his daily routine, and that the program helped him see how to improve their own program.

In addition to the mentor project, the *MOST Initiative* helped Seattle Central Community College (SCCC) establish the first School-age Children Youth and Families Focus areas with the college's Child and Family Study program. Three courses were offered for three years in a row and reached in over 179 students gaining the appropriate skills to work with school-age children and youth. In the evaluation on the SCCC Courses, a resounding 82% felt that their participation in the classes affected their personal perception of self-worth as a care provider and that 41.5% had a greater awareness of school-age care as a career. Indeed, one of the greatest challenges in this field is the high turnover rate. If these participants felt they had other opportunities within the field, the turnover rate may soon start to decrease. Statistics show that the highest quality programs have staff that are well compensated and remain in the position for long periods of time. Statistics show that this ensures that children and youth have positive caring adult role models. This is the end result that all of us would like to see in Seattle and elsewhere across the country.

In addition to the college classes, community workshops, and on-site training, School's Out Consortium provides access to a resource lending library for both programs and

trainers, and works with the statewide membership organizations, the Washington School-Age Care Alliance to coordinate an annual conference for providers from all across the state. Regional workshops are also implemented with assistance from School's Out. This training model has enabled a very small amount of funding to benefit an entire state with hundreds of providers.

In the study conducted in conjunction with the Seattle MOST initiative project, the evaluator found that parents, trainers, and providers alike expressed the importance of high quality staff for high quality out-of-school time programs. "Programs are only as good as the people who perform that job." This statement clearly and succinctly states what is true for any profession. Well trained staff are a critical piece of the infrastructure that supports the system of caring for children and youth. If any one piece of this system is neglected or lacks adequate resources and planning, the entire system is affected. Quality programs needs to be affordable, accessible, and be sufficient in number to meet the demands of families. This infrastructure, is the very essence of a system and that happens not by chance, but as we have learned in Seattle, by thoughtful planning, community and involvement, and the dedication of local, state, and federal dollars to implement.

Statement of Senator Boxer
Testimony before the Sub-Committee on Children and Families
Hearing on After School Care
March 5, 1998
10:30 a.m., SD 430

I am pleased to testify today about after school programs, and I want to thank the committee for its diligence in exploring this important issue.

Today, I will address two aspects of after school programs. First, why should the Federal Government care about after school programs? And second, what might these programs look like?

Millions of hard-working American families deal with child care issues every day. Arranging for child care in the after school hours can be particularly challenging. In many families, both parents or the sole parent work outside the home -- and many children don't have a safe, supervised place to go after school, before their parents return home from work.

Today's youth face far greater risks than did their parents and grandparents. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, youth are most at risk of committing violent acts and being victims of violent crimes after 3 p.m., when they are not in school.

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Over 170 of the nation's leading police chiefs, sheriffs and prosecutors, and the president of the Fraternal Order of Police, have signed a statement urging public officials to "[p]rovide for all of America's school-age children and teens, after-school programs, and access to weekend and summer programs that offer recreation, academic support and community service experience." They state, "no one knows better than we that the most important weapons against crime are the investments which keep kids from becoming criminals. . . ." Los Angeles Police Chief Bernard Parks has said, "Police leaders know America's commitment to putting criminals in jail must be matched by its commitment to keeping kids from becoming criminals in the first place."

Because juvenile crime peaks at the close of the school day, we need to give children a safe and supervised place where they can use those hours to their best advantage. Our children deserve much more than custodial care.

To address this, last June I introduced the After School Education and Safety Act (S. 882). This bill would authorize $50 million for each of five years to support the creation and development of as many as 500 after school enrichment programs nationwide for kindergarten, elementary and secondary school aged children. My bill would help schools expand their capacity to address the needs of children during these critical hours.

I know that several bills have been introduced that address after school programs to some degree, and I am committed to working with my colleagues to pass after school legislation this session. Let me, therefore, describe some of the key components of my bill as a springboard for discussion of this issue.

Under my proposal, teachers and parents would work with community representatives to design programs that meet local needs. Schools receiving grants under this bill would develop programs with at least two of the following activities: mentoring programs; academic assistance; recreational activities; and technology training. Schools would also have the option of offering any of the following: drug, alcohol, and gang prevention programs; health and nutrition counseling; and job skills preparation. This broad framework provides schools flexibility and also ensures that children and teens are engaged worthwhile activities.

In addition to giving our youth safe and productive activities in the after-school hours, school-based programs will encourage school districts to fully use a significant and now under-used asset -- the school buildings themselves. Under this bill, activities could also occur in a public facility designated by the school. They're our buildings, so let's use them to benefit our children.

Several successful after school programs now exist, and they can serve as models for other school districts. In Los Angeles, the LA's BEST after school program exemplifies how cities, school districts, and the private sector can develop partnerships to create such programs. Children participating in this program and in the Sacramento START program have shown significant improvement in their grades and greater enthusiasm for school.

Another excellent after school program is the UCLINKS program, where students at the University of California teach computer skills to grade school students, resulting in improved reading and math skills for the children. The Santa Ana Boys and Girls Club collaborates with the elementary school across the street from it, with the University of California, Irvine, and with a neighborhood association to provide many activities, including early literacy and science. These are just a few models. There are many, many others.

Mr. Chairman, the best investment we can make in this country is in our children. I urge my colleagues on this committee to consider this legislation as a framework for action and join me in making after school a safe and productive time for our nation's children.

I am proud to speak out on this issue and to fight to ensure that our nation's children -- the future of our country -- have quality care in the critical after school hours.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF JAMES HORNE

My name is James Horne, I reside at 170 Red Oak Street, Bridgeport, Connecticut and I am a life long resident of Bridgeport. I would like to thank the committee and Senator Dodd for the opportunity to address this distinguished body, and inform to you about an innovative public-private partnership involving school facilities as sites for after-school and summer programs.

As a resident of Bridgeport I have been a longtime advocate for children in our community. My efforts have included volunteer service and oversight as a board member for several organizations including the Bridgeport YMCA, and Inner City Children's Center (a Headstart program). Additionally, I am Founder and President of the Bridgeport Youth Coalition, which is an organization committed to providing positive activities for children between the ages of 6 and 16. I am also serving my third four year term as a member of the Bridgeport Board of Education. Through my involvement in these organizations, I have had the opportunity to help improve children's chances for success. The economic challenges that have confronted our city have stifled our community's ability to assist and support youth as they confront the increased violence and proliferation of drugs and crime in their neighborhoods. The City of Bridgeport has faced serious problems in an economy with a shrinking employment base and generation after generation of welfare recipients. Now, with the inception of welfare reform, parents and primary care givers are finding it increasingly difficult to ensure that the young people in their care will have safe places to go after school and during the summer months.

In the early 1990's, communities all across the city struggled with the dilemma of how to support and nurture their children. With a shrinking city budget and limited state funding the challenge was to create additional programs to serve the needs of our children. We met the challenge by creating the Bridgeport Youth Coalition. The idea was to create an organization that could coordinate local youth service providers, city government and small businesses into a funding collaborative to support the needs of youth in the North End of Bridgeport. Our goal through the program was to enhance the outcome and performance of the children. My role as founder was to be the advocate and fundraiser for Bridgeport Youth Coalition. One of the biggest problems was finding a facility in the community. We wanted to encourage community and parental involvement, as well as avoid transportation costs that would be incurred with a site further away.

During that same time, the city began to explore ways to utilize our 26 school buildings more effectively and efficiently for our young people. Since the school buildings are strategically located around the city, and services such as electricity, heat and security are already supported by the existing city budgets, it made extending the hours that schools are open seem like a cost effective and feasible solution to our problem. In 1992 the city created a community based after-school program called the Lighthouse. This program offers extended hours at 12 school sites. The services are provided by outside community organizations such as local colleges, YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Clubs. The Bridgeport Youth Coalition, which is the only grass roots organization, was given an opportunity to provide services at two elementary schools in the North End.

The Lighthouse program hours are from 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. Services provided during those hours included tutoring, arts & crafts, recreational programs, and computer training. Its primary objective is to offer young people a safe place to be after school. We serve 2,500 young people. The attachments that I have provided will give you a detailed look at the program file that was produced by various Lighthouse programs in the community. Bridgeport has demonstrated that these services have successfully decreased students behavioral problems and reduced juvenile delinquency.

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The Bridgeport Youth Coalition has used its funding from the Lighthouse program to serve more than 500 young people in the North End of the city. It has also allowed caring adults to interact with the children in a structured environment. During our five years of existence, we have served well over 2,000 young people and employed more than 100 adults in the community. However, have faced several challenges along the way. The first was gaining acceptance from the city and established youth service providers. There was a lot of talk about our lack of experience and expertise in serving youth, but the Bridgeport Youth Coalition overcame that barrier. Since we were from the community we knew firsthand the needs of our children and were able to create programs that addressed those specific needs. Our second obstacle was the management of funds in the administration of the organization. Initially, we depended upon the city to provide assistance, but in a short period of time we were able to support our own payroll and other associated administrative functions. We are now able to focus our attention on other issues such as programing for at risk teens, job training, and collaboration with other community organizations.

In addition to the community programs of the Bridgeport Youth Coalition there are dozens of youth service organizations providing programs at the 15 Bridgeport school sites. Our programs now range from "3 to 6" model to extended day and evening programs running until 9:00 p.m. We also have been able to provide several programs that are open all day Saturday. We hope to continue the expansion of the Lighthouse program so that every child in the City of Bridgeport has the opportunity to take part. We would also like to address the needs of students requiring special services, specifically students with learning and physical disabilities.

In closing, I would like to thank this committee for giving me the opportunity to make this presentation. I hope that I have provided you with some additional insight on the importance of providing safe places for young people in a caring environment. I must stress in closing, that the success of the Bridgeport Youth Coalition and the Lighthouse program is primarily due to the strength of community public- private partnerships.

STATEMENT OF EDWARD A. FLYNN,

CHIEF OF POLICE, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

on behalf of Fight Crime: Invest In Kids

March 5, 1998

My name is Edward A. Flynn, and I am the Chief of Police in Arlington, Virginia. I speak today on behalf of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, a national anti-crime organization led by police, prosecutors and crime survivors. From communities of all sizes and all corners of the map, we crime fighters and victims are saying: Our country's most powerful weapons against crime are the programs that help all children get the right start in life — quality child care for pre-school kids and after-school programs to give school-age kids an alternative to unsupervised afternoons that too often involve teen drug use and juvenile crime.

Every day, my officers and police officers across the country work to make sure dangerous criminals are behind bars where they belong. But we've seen too much to think that we can win the war on crime with more police and more prisons alone. In my 27-year police career, I have been chief in three jurisdictions: one prosperous suburban town, one desperately poor inner city, and now a socially and economically diverse county. One thing has remained constant in all three jurisdictions: regardless of race, ethnicity or class, our children are most vulnerable to temptation and to crime in the hours between 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. We owe it to their safety — and to *ours* — to act on our knowledge of that fact.

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If we did not vaccinate our children against polio, we would have a polio epidemic. Until we start vaccinating our kids against crime — by supporting proven, high-quality child and youth development programs to fill their out-of-school time with positive, constructive and supervised activities that grow their brains and their values — we will be stuck in the crime epidemic that each day takes the lives of scores of innocent Americans.

THE AFTER-SCHOOL HOURS: PRIME TIME FOR VIOLENT JUVENILE CRIME

According to FBI data compiled by the National Center for Juvenile Justice and presented last fall to Attorney General Janet Reno, the peak hours for violent juvenile crime are from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. In fact, the first hour after the end of school is by far the most frequent of the day. Violent juvenile *triples* in that hour. Nearly half occurs by 5:00 p.m., and fully two-thirds occurs during the nine hours between 2:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

Youth development programs — including before- and after-school, weekend and summer programs — are proven to dramatically reduce the surge of crime we see in the after-school hours today. They are also proven to give kids skills and values — like respect, responsibility, hard work and community service — that help them grow up to be the good neighbors we want them to be, instead of the criminals we fear they might become. Their impact is immediate and powerful. For example:

- A study in a public housing project starting an after-school program compared juvenile arrests with those in another housing project providing only minimal recreational services. The number of juvenile arrests plummeted 75 percent in the months following inception of the after-school program, while they were increasing by 67 percent in the comparison project.

- A study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters' carefully-designed mentoring program by Public/Private Ventures showed that the 10- to 16-year-olds randomly assigned to receive a trained mentor were only about half as likely to begin illegal drug use or to hit someone as those randomly assigned to the control group.

- A study of the Quantum Opportunities Program — which offers at-risk high-schoolers a program of counseling, academic and life-skills support, community service and financial incentives — found that participants randomly assigned to participate in the program were less than one-quarter as likely to be convicted of a crime during the high-risk high school years as those in a control group. In other words, denying kids these services *The impact on crime was virtually immediate.* Programs like Quantum Opportunities show what can happen when after-school enrichment activities are integrated with in-school help for at-risk youngsters.

To put it another way: Denying and after-school program to kids in the housing project study *quadrupled* the risk they'd be involved in criminal behavior. Denying kids access to services like the Quantum Opportunities Program's multiplied by four times the likelihood that they would be convicted of a crime while in high school. Denying at-risk teens and pre-teens a trained mentor *doubled* or *tripled* the likelihood that they'll start using drugs. When kids don't have access to quality programs in their out-of-school time, we all pay the price in lives and in fear.

These and other studies are described in more detail in the report *Quality Child Care and After-School Programs: Powerful Weapons Against Crime*, released last month by FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS.

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After-school programs do more than prevent crime. Quality school-age programs have special importance for low-income youth, especially those growing up in neighborhoods where "hanging out" means being exposed to widespread negative influences from older youth and adults. Studies show that when they get quality after-school programs these youngsters learn to be more cooperative, get along better with others and handle conflicts better, read more, participate in more academic activities, and have better grades and school conduct than kids who don't have access to after-school programs.

Participants in the Quantum Opportunities Program were 50 percent more likely to graduate from high school on time, and more than twice as likely to go on to post-secondary schooling.

It is time that America made sure all children, and especially the children most at-risk, have access to quality after-school programs that can steer them clear of crime and build them into contributing citizens instead. As the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development observed in its report on youth development programs, "risk will be transformed into opportunity" when we provide young people with the out-of-school youth development programs that can turn "their non-school hours into the time of their lives."

LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORT INVESTMENTS IN KIDS

If you don't believe the studies, ask the law enforcement leaders who spend every day on the front lines. In a Northeastern University poll, when police chiefs nation-wide were asked to rank the long-term effectiveness of a number of possible crime-fighting approaches, the chiefs picked "increasing investment in programs that help all children and youth get a good start" as the "most effective" crime-prevention strategy *nearly four-to-one* over "trying more juveniles as adults" or even "hiring additional police officers." And *ninety-two percent of police chiefs* agreed that "America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more" in after-school programs and quality care for pre-schoolers.

Police know we'll never be able to win the war on crime with just more arrest or tougher sentencing or bigger prisons. That's why more than 200 police chiefs, prosecutors, crime victims, and the leaders of two of America's largest police officer organizations issued a *Call for Action* last month, urging Congress and state legislatures to provide enough funding to ensure that while parents are at work, all children in America get the quality child care and after-school programs proven to help them get the right start in life and stay on track through their school-age years.

That same call was adopted two weeks ago by the Major Cities Chiefs organization. The Major Cities Chief represent 49 of America's largest metropolitan areas, and they don't often pass resolutions. But last month they voted unanimously to call for public policies supporting quality child care and after-school programs for all kids.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nation-wide, each day's final school bell starts *more than 5 million* latchkey kids on an unsupervised afternoon that too often involves crime, gangs, drugs and teen-age sex. The results are tragic... and avoidable.

From a crime-prevention perspective, it is critical to provide after-school services in high-crime areas. All of America's children should have access to quality programs in the before- and after-school hours, during the summer and on weekends — but priority one must be making sure that these programs reach the kids who are most at-risk of criminal behavior.

We believe it is critical that, as a first step, Congress propose funding *increases in mandatory spending* over the next five years of **at least $5 billion for after-school programs and youth development programs** designed to help school-age children learn the values and skills of good citizenship and personal achievement. Supported programs should include a range of activities including recreation, academic enrichment, the arts, and community service.

This amounts, while it still fall short of meeting America's crime-prevention need, would represent one of the most powerful steps Congress has taken towards closing our gaping *crime prevention deficit* — the penny-wise, pound-foolish shortfall in support of quality child care and after-school programs for kids that now endangers every American.

Speaking for myself and my colleagues in law enforcement, I should also emphasize this point: **Increases in after-school care for school-age youth should not come at the expense of quality care for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.** Investments in children during the crucial developmental years before kindergarten are also powerful weapons against crime. Studies have shown that denying at-risk toddlers quality child care may multiply by up to *five times* the risk that they will become chronic law-breakers as adults, and by up to *ten times* the risk they will be delinquent at age 16.

To protect America's public safety, Congress should also increase mandatory spending over the next five years by:

- **at least an additional $10 billion for Head Start**, so that the program can expand to serve more eligible children, can provide full-day and year-round care for more of the eligible children who need it, and can maintain and further strengthen its quality;
- at least an additional $5 billion for Early Head Start or other quality programs for children under three; and
- at least $20 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant to increase the accessibility and quality of child care for children from families making less than 85 percent of median income.

We also urge that tobacco tax revenues be used to provide secure funding to meet America's child care and after-school needs before they are called upon for other purposes.

As I mentioned above, the public's safety absolutely requires that quality child care and after-school programs reach not only middle-class children and youth, but also those from lower-income families who are most at-risk of being lured into criminal activity. While tax credits for working families can be valuable if they are balanced with other strategies, they are not likely to do enough by themselves to make quality child care accessible to families making less than 85 percent of

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median income. A plan which fails to assure that those youngsters get the right start would miss the most critical public safety need in the child care and youth development area, throwing away an anti-crime weapon we cannot afford to discard.

SUMMARY

For those of us who fight crime every day, the once-quiet crisis in child care is now loud, pervasive, and tragic. We hear it in the scream of our police sirens, rushing to another crime that never had to happen. We hear it in the cries of agony of thousands of crime victims and their families whose lives are lost or shattered each year. We see it as yellow crime scene tape, body bags, and blood-stained sidewalks on the nightly news.

The delivery of child care must take place not in Washington, D.C., but in our communities — through partnerships of schools, parents, businesses and community groups. Everyone knows that. But *there is no more fundamental government responsibility than protecting public safety.* To live up to that obligation, the federal government needs to provide the funds that will enable every community in America to have the after-school programs that cut crime and teach kids crucial values and skills.

If there is one point in the discussion of child care that no American can afford to miss, it is this — if we want our own families to be safe, we all have a stake in making sure that every working family has access to quality child care and after-school programs.

Congress needs to take a stand against crime — a stand that is tough on crime — by saving. We will invest today, on the front end, by supporting the programs proven to give all children the right start. Because we do not want to wait and spend much more — in taxpayers' money, in citizens' fear, and in our constituents' lives — on those vulnerable children who become 'America's Most Wanted' adults of tomorrow."

Mayor Thomas M. Menino
before the
Labor and Human Resources
Subcommittee on Families and Children

March 5, 1998

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you about the need for increased after-school programming for our nation's schoolchildren. As co-chairman of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Task Force on Public Schools, I bring not only my own experience as Mayor of Boston, but the experiences

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of other Mayors attempting to provide safe and structured places for children to go after school.

In Boston, we have learned that after-school programming is one of the most powerful crime and delinquency prevention tools that we have. We have 30,000 teenagers who finish their school day before two o'clock in the afternoon. With nothing to do and no one to watch them, they are bound to get into trouble. The national statistics confirm this: juvenile arrests for violent crime increase by 50 percent between 2:00 and 6:00 PM, and research indicates that juvenile crime triples in the first hour after school ends for the day.

But just as children have the potential to get into trouble, they also have the potential to flourish - when provided with positive alternatives, safe and structured activities, and adults who care about their well being and success. I know most young people will absolutely make the right choice when given the chance. That is what brings me before you today - we need to give more of our children more chances to succeed.

Finding the resources to provide quality programming to every child in need is perhaps the most daunting task facing America's cities and towns.

In Boston, we are approaching the challenge with the same strategy that is at the heart of our juvenile crime prevention effort: effective partnerships. Police, parents, clergy, neighborhood residents and merchants, children and teachers have all worked together and share the credit for our declining youth violence rates in Boston. Now as we continue to expand our after-school system, we have made sure that everyone is at the table. We were fortunate enough in 1995 to be chosen by the DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Foundation as one of three cities nationwide to develop an infrastructure to support comprehensive after-school programming. We

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have learned over the past three years that effective partnerships build quality programs.

The Carnegie Corporation has identified the elements of top-quality programs that really help children move forward, academically and socially. Parent involvement and youth leadership are at the top of the list. Providing a mix of activities for youth is also important, because after-school time is an opportunity to stimulate and challenge our children in ways that are different from the regular school day. If we invest the resources and attention that quality after-school programming demands, we will see the results - not just in declining crime rates, but in improved academic and social outcomes for our children. Linking after-school activities with lessons learned during the school day will also help children achieve the high standards demanded by local, state and national public school reform.

Finding the resources we need will be the ongoing challenge. In January, I announced the Boston 2 to 6 Initiative to galvanize support for increased after-school programming. Through 2 to 6, the City will pay the costs of keeping all of our public school buildings open in the afternoons. We will also continue to provide funding so children of low-income working parents can attend before and after-school programs, and we will continue to support programming at our network of 43 Community Centers throughout Boston. Finally, we are the only city in the country to devote Local Law Enforcement Block Grant funds to after-school programming for the second year in a row.

We are doing all that we can, but we need a permanent source of operating funds for these important programs. We are approaching the private sector, and we are thinking creatively about other ways to access resources.

I applaud the federal government's attention to after-school programming, especially the America After School Act recently introduced by Senator Kennedy. The America After School Act will help cities and towns expand their programs, and ensure that after-school programming becomes a key strategy for preventing juvenile crime and raising academic achievement across the nation.

However, I must caution the committee, on behalf of my fellow Mayors, that towns and cities should be allowed to build their after-school systems in ways that work best for them. New legislation should not mandate that public school buildings are the only appropriate sites for after-school programming. We have many successful programs sited in the Boston Public Schools, but we also have many successful programs in churches, community centers, YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs. Each is deserving of federal support.

We would also welcome the federal government's assistance in helping to build professional recognition for the staff of after-school and child care programs. Low pay, inadequate training and a lack of support cause many talented people to leave the field, forcing programs to contend with frequent staffing turnover and shortages. Quality programming depends on talented teachers. We need to find ways to better reward these important people for their work.

I want to thank you again for asking me to testify here today. I applaud Senator Kennedy and the members of the Committee for their commitment to creating comprehensive after-school programs for youth. I

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look forward to working with you as you move forward to ensure increased resources for these valuable programs.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the subcommittee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:37 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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